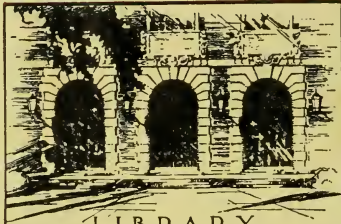


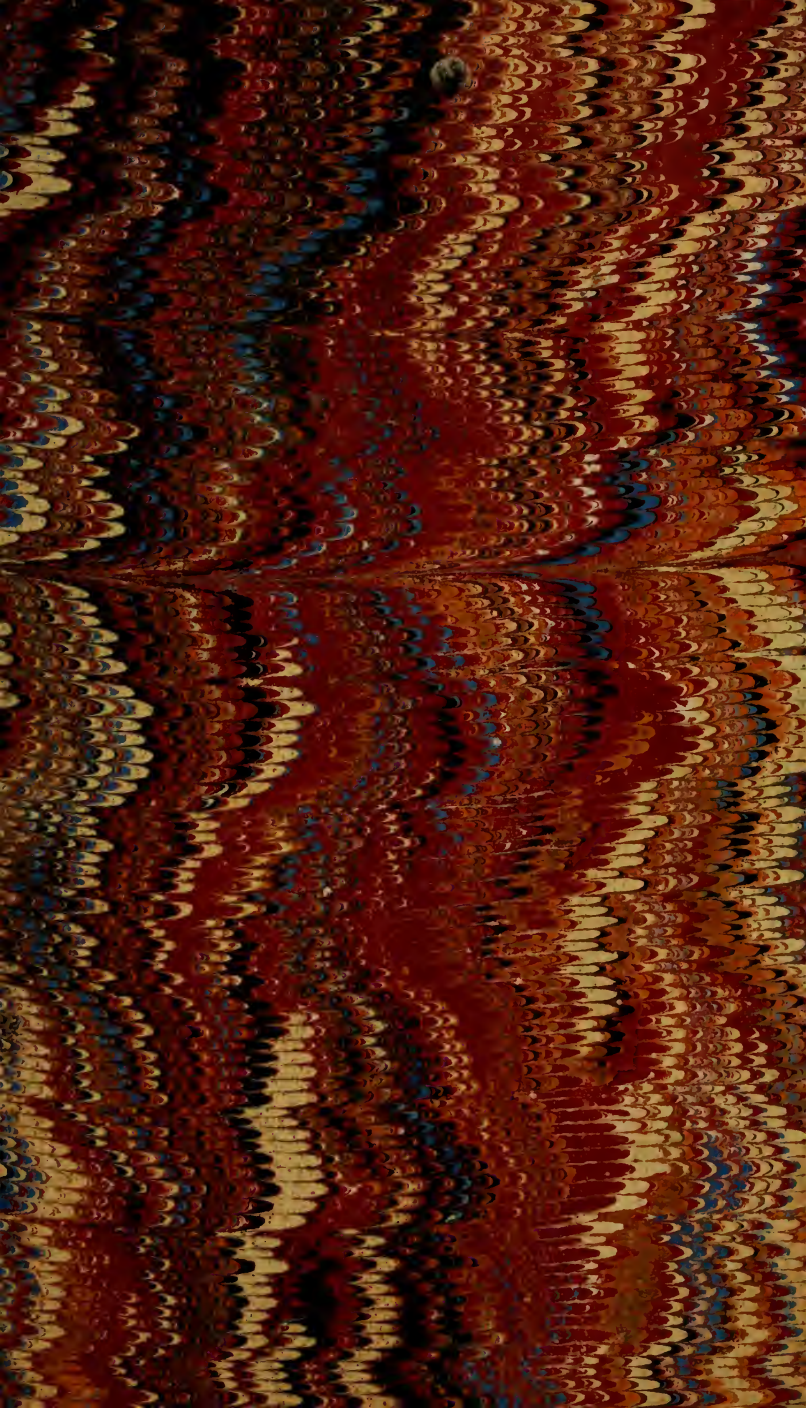
823
8244h
v.3





LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF ILLINOIS

823
B244 h
v. 3





HAMILTON KING,

OR,

THE SMUGGLER AND THE DWARF.

BY

THE OLD SAILOR,

AUTHOR OF

"TOUGH YARNS," "STORIES OF GREENWICH
HOSPITAL," &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1839.

Printed by J. L. Cox and Sons, 75, Great Queen Street,
Lincoln's-Inn Fields.

823

B244-2

v. 3

HAMILTON KING.

CHAPTER I.

“Mark well the African,
The woolly-headed negro: he is a
Subtle humourist, and his queer replies,
Though they seem silly-sooth, have in them more
Than strikes the casual hearer.”—OLD PLAY.

OCT 13 1955

THE morning was faintly breaking as Quaco steered towards the schooner, a long, low, black, snake-like looking thing, with a crew of cut-throats, and a brass nine-pounder. “What sloop is that?” enquired a voice in French.

Quaco had forgotten to ask the name of the vessel, but he promptly gave that of an ugly old colonial craft he had himself once commanded—“Le Bijou,” shouted he, “belonging to Monsieur Pelereaux, of Port au Prince.”

The schooner had now ranged up on the star-board side, and again the voice was heard as the negro hugged closer to them, till they were little

more than a boat-hook's length apart, for the water was as smooth as a mill pond. "What cargo have you got in?"

"Glasso'wisky," shouted the negro, giving the helm another hitch to port.

"What the deuce is that," enquired the other; "starboard your helm—port a little us, you'll be foul of our quarter."

The larboard waist of the schooner, which was next to the sloop, was crowded with men—but before they could sheer any distance from each other, Mr. Herrick and his brave fellows had dropped under the stern of the privateer, and boarding her on the starboard quarter, poured in a volley of small arms, and then rushed with desperate energy upon the enemy, who, though double the numerical strength of the British, were wholly unprepared for the encounter; in fact, seeing nothing but a colonial sloop, they had not even meddled with their arms, their object no doubt, being plunder.

The impetuous rush of the seamen at once decided the business: a few knives were hastily drawn from their sheaths and brandished in self-defence, but terror took possession of their minds; several jumped overboard and tried to swim to the sloop—but Quaco

sheered off, and gave them a wide berth ; the principal portion plunged down the hatchways and concealed themselves below, whilst no small number were stretched on the deck, either killed or wounded ; and many of the latter, rendered desperate by the emergency of their situation, fought with their opponents, and brought down death upon themselves. Not a single casualty happened to the man-of-war's men, and in less than five minutes the privateer was entirely their own.

“ Whar 'em tink o' pilot-boat now, Massa Earwig ?” shouted Quaco, making the air ring again with his merry laugh.

“ I'd tell you, ye Newcastle angel—I'd tell you what I think, if I was alongside o' you,” growled the master's mate, who did not relish the negro's familiarity. “ But now, lads,” continued he, addressing the men, “ bear a hand and clear the decks :—corporal !” The corporal of marines stepped out and gave a military flourish with his hand to his hat. “ Corporal you was once doctor's sarvant in a frigate, I'm tould.”

“ I was, sir, some years ago, before I was promoted to my present rank,” returned the non-commissioned officer.

“Well, then, as you ought to know summut about sword-cuts and gun-shot wounds, I hereby appoints you surgeon extrawdinary to myself. Now, overhaul them there fellows,” pointing to the prostrate privateer’s men, “and if you finds any on ’em likely to howld on by the life-lines, why just send ’em abaft. Johnson, get a sail spread chock aft for the wounded ; and I’m thinking, corporal,” added he, in a lower voice, “if there’s any on ’em dragging their anchors for t’other world, and isn’t likely to ride it out long, why it ’ud save ’em a good deal of pain and misery, and be all the better for us, if you expended ’em at once among the D D’s*—you understand me, corporal.”

“Not exactly, sir,” responded the non-commissioned officer, who though he really did comprehend what the other meant, yet was prevented by humane considerations from acknowledging it. “You wish the wounded to be shifted aft, sir.”

“Yes—yes,” grumbled the master’s mate, vexed that the broad hint he had given had not been taken ; at the same time not over anxious that the sole responsibility of the proposition should rest upon him-

* DD. Two letters placed against the name of any seaman who died, signifying Discharged Dead.

self. "And now, lads," uttered he to the people, "what's to be done with all these here prisoners? If we sends 'em ashore they'll alarm the whole coast, and our cruise will in course be up; if we keeps 'em aboard they'll be cursedly in the way;" he paused a moment to collect their ideas from the expression of their countenances, and then added, turning to the coxswain, "It won't do to heave 'em overboard, Johnson!"

The latter part of this brief address was uttered in that sort of tone which implied a perfect willingness to perform such an operation, but a desire that the proposal should emanate from another, as it might produce awkward inquiries, and unpleasant consequences afterwards. "No, sir," responded the coxswain, "it would never do to make the onfortunates walk the plank, though I dare say there's many on 'em richly desarves it. But a good deal, Muster Herrick, must depend on what you means to do with the schooner."

"Take her into the sarvice, to be sure, Joe," answered the officer, "and we may as well do it at once. Hoist the ensign and pennant."

"They're in the sloop, sir," announced one of the

crew ; “ but, if we hoists a blue jacket instead, I’m thinking it will be all reg’lar enough.”

“ I hope Mr. Herrick will consider the honour of the royal marines, and hoist one of our jackets at the same time,” said the corporal.

“ Why that’s a point as requires a little hargy-fication,” returned the master’s mate ; “ now you know the sarvices ar’n’t on a level, not by no manner o’ means, and, consequently, to bend ’em on alongside of each other wouldn’t be proper discipline ; but you may hoist the jolly’s consarn about one-third or a little more down than the bit o’ blue, and that will be about the amagraphy of the thing ;” and, thus united, the emblems were hoisted. “ I arn’t got time to make you another speech,” continued Herrick, “ but you may consider that which I made in the sloop repeated again, and it will do just as well. Though, mayhap, as it won’t be altogether ship-shape either, I’d better not omit it. Send the hands aft, Johnson :” the men soon collected on the quarter-decks. “ I’ll tell you what it is, my lads,” said he. “ There, drowse your trucks, all on you, whilst your commander speaks. Arn’t you none on you got no better notion of respect for

your colors than to keep your heads covered when an officer reads his commission?" The hats and caps were all removed, and he proceeded. "Now I'll tell you what it is; I arn't by no ways satisfied nor contented with our prizes, seeing as the trifle they'll fetch will have to be shared out among so many, and the head-money won't come to much. But as we've now got howld of a reg'lar fighting craft, as our own property, and I've expended none on you in boarding, it stands in the nat'ral reckoning of the calkelation of things, that if we, in an owld rattle-trap sloop capturs a well-manned and well-armed privateer-schooner, why we ought in that same schooner to take, sink or destroy, summut worth talking about. At all events I'll have a week's cruise, if I don't get anything else, so here goes for Cape Teburoon."

"But the wounded, Muster Herrick, what'll you do with them?" remonstrated the coxswain; "them cutlash wounds are the very devils to fester in a hot climate."

"And bring on mortification and lock-jaw," uttered the corporal, desirous of showing his surgical knowledge.

"You'll hould your jaw, if you please," said the

master's mate, to the great mortification of the corporal's self-esteem.

"But it's true, Muster Herrick," continued Johnson; "and to do as you'd be done by oughtn't never to be forgot."

"Pity they didn't make a methody parson on you, Joe," said the master's mate, contemptuously; "you'd have made a prime hand in fitting out a sarmon."

"I hopes, Muster Herrick, I shall never be wanting in humanity to an enemy arter he's struck," returned Johnson. "Now, in all due respect, as we've never got no doctor among us,"—the corporal coughed, "I would run in off—Jackanmoll,* and see what there is loading there; and, whether or no, I'd put the wounded into the small boats, and send 'em ashore just as we're coming out again."

"Well, it's odd, too, for a couple of us to have the same thoughts," said the master's mate, more complacently; "do you know, Johnson, I, was overhauling the same thing in my mind, and them there's precisely my own ideas. But see, they've

* Jaquemel, a sea-port, on the south side of San Domingo; it is situated near the neck of the Peninsula, and Port au Prince lies a short distance across the land to the north.

got the sail ready; now then, my lads, some on you lift the wounded abaft. Why the devil arn't you examining them, corporal? do you mean to have your rating without doing the duty?"

Thus admonished, the corporal inspected the wounded, many of whom were terribly mangled; and whilst one party was removing them aft, another was engaged in attaching weights to the dead and committing them to their ocean grave, which opened to receive its prey, was ruffled for the moment as the sullen plunge was heard, and then rolled on as smooth as ever.

The schooner's name was *La Serpent*, of eight four-pounders, a long brass nine acting on a swivel, well found in arms and ammunition, plenty of wine and rum, but rather slender in her outfit of stores and provisions. She had forty-seven hands when first boarded, but sixteen of them were consigned to the deep, and the wounded numbered nearly as many more, so destructive had been the volley and the rush of the seamen upon the enemy, as they stood huddled together looking at the sloop. Amongst the former was the captain, almost the first who fell, and the next in command was desperately wounded; the crew had been a heterogeneous mass

of French, Dutch, Swedes, Spaniards, mulattoes, and revolted negroes, and it is singular that the principal portion of the survivors were people of colour.

“Drop the pinnace round on the larboard side,” ordered the master’s mate; “make all snug in her, and bear a hand about it, for the sun ’ull be out o’ the bush presently, and his honest face, when it’s clean, ’ud put many a rogue to the blush. At all events, let us be jogging on when they opens their daylight ashore. And now, Johnson, what have you got to say about Jackymoll?”

“Quaco says he knows the place well enough,” resumed the seaman; “he was talking about it whilst we lay at the back of November there, and was telling us that there was generally a craft or two loading which we might bring away, supposing that we could get in without being discovered. And now, Muster Herrick, we may do the trick without being suspected; and, whether or no, we can leave the poor fellows behind us, so as to have clear decks if we should fall in with anything worth man-handling.”

“All square,” returned the master’s mate; “we’ll jog on quietly with the sloop. Up with the helm, and fill upon her; there’s a nice little breeze abaft.”

He placed his hands on each side his mouth, by way of speaking-trumpet, and hailed, "Sloop, ahoy!"

"Ay, ay, Massa Earwig, me hear em," answered the black; "you hab plenny o' work dere."

"Keep in my wake, Quaco," again hailed the mate; "I'll send the boat astarn for you presently. Keep close in my wake—hear'ee?"

"Ees, Massa Earwig, me hear em well enough," returned Quaco, laughing. "De marchantman alays follow him pilot-boat."

"Hould your ivory, yer grinning lump o' jet!" grumbled Herrick;—"and yet, Johnson, we carn't well do without him in this here affair, and so the lubber takes advantage of it. He can palaver the French lingo—not but what I could overhaul a fake or two of it myself upon a pinch—and so we'll run in and rekoniter what's to be the upshot; and if there's a bit of fighting to be done, why we've just got the boys as can do it, purwided there's an officer of experience to lead em, and which I flatters myself, on this here occasion, the sarvice carn't produce a more properer or more fitterer person than Muster Samuel Herrick, of his majesty's sloop Glasso'wisky. Not that I loves boasting; but there, Johnson, nobody knows better nor yourself

that a man's merit is a man's merit. Now haul down the colours, and sarve out some rum."

As soon as the vessels were put before the wind, or rather brought it on their quarters, Hamilton walked aft to Quaco, and inquired whether there was not a possibility of giving the schooner the slip when they got in-shore.

"Neber, massa," returned he; "dey hab long gun peak a we tan tiff, and spose no mind 'em—knock a hole troo de bottom, and sloop go to glorio."

"But how is it, Quaco, that I find you here fighting against the flag of your mistress and the country of your adoption?" asked Hamilton, with symptoms of displeasure—for he had been so long naturalized to the French that he looked upon the English as his enemies.

"Em too long tory for tell him now, me massa," replied the black. "Quaco flag all colour one time or noder—red, white, blue, yellow—"

"And black!" exclaimed Hamilton, interrupting him with eagerness, as he fixed an earnest look upon his face; but the negro's manner was unchanged.

"Ees, me massa, an sometime black," assented Quaco, with a knowing catch of his head; "wharra harm in dat?—black man hab black flag."

“ And that saved your life, I suppose, when the Bon Mari was taken ?” remarked Hamilton, reproachfully.

“ Darra time o’ de hurricane—no ?” responded the negro ; and, as if desirous of avoiding the inquiry, he laughed loud and long.

“ I shall know my friends better another time, I hope,” said Hamilton, angrily, and walking away.

“ Well den, me massa, tan littlee bit, you please, and heeree me peak,” requested Quaco ; and Hamilton stopped. “ When dat snake-in-a-guinea-grass pirate com alongside de brig, me know ’em directly—’cause, Monsieur Ami, me once hab de misfortun to sail wid him ; and so Quaco tink to hesef, ‘ ’Pose come aboard, find him here, den he go dead ; ’pose swim to ’cooner, tell ’em passager and plenny dollar get away in de boat wid a captain, but good plunder left, dey gib me chance for life, and me try to sabe me massa.’ ”

“ It’s very little you thought of me, old man,” said Hamilton, again returning to the negro’s side ; “ you thought only of your own safety.”

“ ’Ponna me honour, Monsieur Ami,” exclaimed the black, placing his hand upon his breast, “ me tink of you, and how he break de heart for me missee,

'pose neber see you again. So Quaco swim to de 'cooner, and tell 'em ebery ting someting, and where dey find de boasun."

"You could not act so wickedly!" uttered the youth, with disgust; "then he owes his death to you, and you have been his murderer! Yet, Quaco, you will call yourself a Christian!"

"No, me massa, me only poor nigger rangootang den," answered the negro, with a peculiar look of mingled shrewdness and assumed ignorance.

"And so, for a few idle words, you sacrificed a fellow-creature!" uttered Hamilton, with strong emphasis.

"Scrathcyfied, massa! what he call scratchy-fied?" asked Quaco, perverting the word "sacrificed."—"T'an littlee bit, saar! Em boasun neber hab tought for we, 'pose he got in a boat darra time; and Quaco tink to hesef, 'Happen 'em find him boasun, he tell for me young massa, and him missee break him heart.'"

"How can I believe a word of this," said Hamilton, "when you left me on the wide ocean alone, with the dead corpse hanging at the peak?"

"Better dan leab him libe corpse, massa," urged

the negro ; “ and me no tink for leab you alone, and the buckra man-o’-war come for take you off.”

“ But he did not come to take me off,” said the youth ; “ I was alone—entirely alone, with that horrible corpse swinging in the wind !”—and he shuddered at the recollection.

“ Me only tink so, me massa,” argued Quaco, quietly. “ But de buckra man-o’-war catchee we in de ’coon, and take em to Jamaica. Me tell ’em me passager in de brig, and me massa leab aboard sans ebery ting ; but captain take de pirate to Kington, where dey all try for he life, till dey get like him boasun all along shore, and tring em up like ingons from my country, and dat England.”

“ But what proofs had they of piracy ?” inquired Hamilton ; “ they could know nothing of the plundering of the brig and the murder of her crew—they could know nothing of the condition in which we had been abandoned.”

“ Oh, dere plenny proof, massa,” said Quaco, knowingly, and giving the youth a look fraught with meaning. “ Dere part of de cargo, and dere—”

“ Was Quaco,” uttered Hamilton, again fixing his eager look upon the old man.

“Ees, me massa, me dere,” acquiesced the negro quietly; “no help for dat any how, when dey put me in a jail.”

“And you gave evidence against the pirates?” said the youth—“you again turned upon your friends?”

“Friends, massa!” exclaimed the black, “Gara-mercie! ’em poor friends in a ’coon. No, no—me find one friend in de man-o’-war know Quaco in Jamaica, ’peak two, dree word for me, and behabe like one genelman to anoder. Me neber hab conceit for haangman collar.”

“You have heard nothing, then, of Madame Brienot?” inquired Hamilton; “I suppose you have been ever since in the king’s ship?”

“No, massa, hear noting—dat one. Ees, massa, me man-o’-war man now—dat two,” answered the negro, numbering the responses to the questions. “And now, monsieur, wharra you do for get here?”

“I must tell you that some other time, Quaco,” replied the youth; “I was trying to get to Port au Prince, where Madame Brienot now is, and still hope that the English officers will put me ashore.”

The negro shook his head. “Me lub me missee—me lub me young massa. ’Pose den Frenchman

catchee we—wharra den? Madame Burnoh—Monsieur Ami—Massa Quaco, get 'em gulleemteem. No good dat."

Hamilton ruminated for a few minutes, and the probability immediately struck him that the commissioners would be glad to embrace any plausible pretext for destroying the widow, so as to enable them unmolested to confiscate her property, and transfer it to their own uses; for they were well aware that she had purchased the estate at Bordeaux, and invested money both in the French and English funds, besides retaining her legal right to the fertile and productive Solitaire. "But what would be the best to be done, Quaco?" said he.

"Massa one Anglice man," returned the black—"no hab Frence blood in him heart. England fight de Frence—no? wharra for, me massa, den fight de Anglice?"

"You would have me then at once abandon the French, and join my supposed countrymen?" said Hamilton. "I own my inclinations tend that way—or, rather, it is an impulse that I cannot control."

"Massa may call 'em pulse, 'pose him please; me call em rope," responded the negro, putting his hand

in a dangling position to his neck, so as to convey an idea of hanging. "Darra Massa Earwig open him eye for hearee you peak Anglice. Massa Johnson tella you peak Frence. Garamercie! but dem up to ebery ting. You no for 'member darra time when we lib at de plantation, me wear me white craabat and me white silk tocking—no? Where 'em gone now?"

Hamilton contemplated the change in the negro's apparel, which had certainly been very great. At the Solitaire he was at all times particularly clean and neat, and not unfrequently elegant in his dress; now a pair of canvas trowsers, an old check shirt, a well-worn blue jacket, a woollen cap, and a pair of slop shoes, formed the whole of his costume. "I must admit," said the youth, "that the alteration is for the worse."

"Massa, no tink me like to hab 'em all again?" argued the black; "me cocklem hat—me white craabat—me silk tocking—me frill sart—me gold repeatem—me dress coat—and noder time, me top boot round me neck—no?" He shook his head, mournfully; and after a melancholy grunt, exclaimed, "Nem mind—massa—nem mind," he began singing—

“ Me lose me sooe,
In an old canoe,
Johnny, oh ! come wind em so ! ”

Ah, dem de times for neber come again—plenny wine
—plenny ebery ting for hungry belly—good missee
—good massa, Quaco all same, noder genelman, now
—but nem mind, massa—nem mind—neber see de
day for dog nyam razor—all right bum by.”

“ You wish me to believe, then, that you would
willingly return to Madame Brienot, if such a
thing could possibly be effected ? ” said Hamil-
ton.

“ Ees, massa, 'spose possib for infected ! ” re-
turned the black. “ But me know bery well not
possib ; massa Earwig no for let em go—dat one
ting ; 'pose let em go, dem blaack rascal cut em
troat—dat two ting ; 'pose blaack rascal no cut em
troat, dem Frencemen chop him head off—dat tree
ting ! and Madame Burnoh go kingom come in a
gullemtéen. ! No, no, Monsieur Ami, you Anglice-
man now, and under proper flag ! Madame Burnoh
get away—go to France, we get away—go to
France too.”

There was certainly policy in Quaco's ar-
rangement—at least, so Hamilton thought ; but

there was no time for further consultation, as the schooner's boat was veered astern by a tow-line; and Herrick hailed the negro to give up his charge to the two men that were in her, and return himself in the boat. The exchange was effected without loss of time; and Quaco and his young master were again separated.

"Well, old coast o' Guinea," said the master's mate; "they tell me you are well acquainted with this coast—do you know the port of Jackymoll?"

"Do me know de grog time o' day, massa Earwig?" answered the negro. "Ees, me know em bery well, tankee."

"And do you think there is any likelihoods of bringing any thing out, old boy, supposing we stand in?" said the master's mate.

"Em not know dat, massa Earwig," responded the black, dubiously: "'pose noting dere—no noting to bring out! 'pose craft dere—no catchee no habee!"

"Well, that's nigger philosophy at all events," said the corporal. "Quaco makes it all out as straight as a ramrod."

"He'd make a Philadelphia lawyer," exclaimed the master's mate, jeeringly. "Do you know your

way in and out again, old Ebony?—that's all I want to know now."

"Ees, massa Earwig—me 'teer de 'cooner troo moquito eye," answered Quaco. "But hab battery and long gun dere, and 'pose em hit da 'cooner!" he began singing—

"Me lose me boot,
In a pilot boat !

massa Earwig !"

"Clap a stopper on your muzzle, old man," said Johnson ; who was apprehensive the negro would excite the irritability of the master's mate, and probably get a blow. "If you're sartin you can carry the schooner in, why that's all about it—leave the fighting to Muster Herrick !"

"But em twenty-four pounder neber ax who he kill," argued Quaco. "Pose him no hit massa Earwig or massa Johnson—Garamercie ! he hit me, and den wharra me do for go dead ?"

"The fellow's a coward !" exclaimed the master's mate, with contempt : "it ud hardly be safe to trust him, Johnson ?"

"I'm thinking its ounly his way o' letting on you know that there's batteries in the neighbourwood," said the coxswain ; "for arter all, Muster Herrick,

he's not nothing but a ignorant nigger, as does every thing by inkstinck. Will you engage to take charge, and not bump us ashore, ould woolley head?"

"Ky, massa Johnson," exclaimed the negro, laughingly; "neber fear for him pilot-boat go on de rock."

"Out o' that, ye black warmint," exclaimed the master's-mate in a rage, and aiming a blow at Quaco, which the latter avoided, the rope's end alighted smartly on the corporal's shoulders. "I didn't mean to hit you, Jolly," continued Herrick; "but if that ould imp arn't ha done with his etarnal pilot-boat, I'll make him hoist his jack for a pilot into a hotter place than ever he has been in yet."

"Many tankee, saar," returned Quaco, still grinning at a distance. "You take me for Rangoo Tang too. Nem mind, tan littlee bit, bum by hab noder hurricane, and den nigger tan tiff."

Jaquemel was a small place embayed, and then the resort of privateers, which laid here partly concealed, and at every opportunity slipped out to pick up a Jamaica-man—nor were they very scrupulous in plundering ships of their own nation, or committing piracy of any kind—the produce being easily transferred to the Spanish city San Domingo, or to

the French town Port-au-Prince—though the former was the favourite, as the merchants there gave the best price.

It was a regular West India day—the sun poured down his burning rays without a cloud to intervene and lessen their intensity—there was scarcely a breath of wind, and the schooner and the sloop were borne along unresistingly by the current. Hamilton called to remembrance many of the mountains he had seen from the Solitaire, and they revived recollections of past enjoyments, whilst his heart swelled with grateful emotions for the many acts of kindness he had received from his generous benefactress. From this contemplation his mind reverted to earlier years, for since the time of his first communication with Quaco he had made it a constant practice to tax his memory with all the occurrences of his infantile days, that were yet treasured in their mystic veil, and by frequently conversing on the subject, to give them the utmost consistency that it was possible to obtain.

The countenance, the manners, and the mode of speech of the old gentleman, who was accustomed to stroke his head and speak encouragingly as he presented him with cakes—these he had never forgotten

—they were still vivid and fresh in his recollection ; in fact, more so than any other thing that the mind retained. His sister Ellen often flitted like a vision before him in his dreams and in his waking thoughts ; and the cutter, Feaghan, O'Rafferty, Ned Jones, and Neptune, with other circumstances, came in confused promiscuousness to mystify his intellects. Names too, except those of his sister, Ned Jones, and Neptune, were alike oblivious ; and though Madame Brienot remembered the vessel's name was " Blue Bob," yet it made but a small increase in those items of knowledge by which he hoped, on some future occasion, to ascertain who and what he was.

And now, as he sat on the windlass-end trying to link and connect events and periods together, his heart sickened and his spirits became faint. It is true that Madame Brienot had been to him as a mother, nor had he enjoyed many opportunities of witnessing the endearments arising from parental and filial affection ; but there were the principles and operations of nature stirring within his breast—that unceasing flame that only expires when the light of life is extinguished, and the mortal lamp is exchanged for one of purer brightness, or a fire that is

never quenched—a still small voice was ever whispering to him—there was at all times an ardent longing to behold the face of his parents—an earnest craving for some acknowledged tie, some recognised bond, to unite him to relatives and kindred.

Arduous were the struggles in his breast as to his future course, and keen was his agony as the improbability of his being allowed to land, grew stronger and stronger into conviction, and he pictured to himself the distress of Madame Brienot when disappointed relative to his coming. He was as yet unacquainted with the intention of the master's-mate to send the wounded ashore at Jaquemel, and therefore not aware that either himself or Quaco would have an opportunity of transmitting intelligence to the widow; but not so the black, for Quaco discovered two or three negroes amongst the sufferers, with whom he claimed an intimacy, and promised his assistance to procure their liberation, provided they would send to Port-au-Prince, and inform his mistress of the predicament in which Hamilton and himself were placed. Of course, the promise to exert himself for their liberation was a mere *ruse* to ensure compliance with the request, but he also gave them a stronger incentive—the

certainly of being well rewarded. As he conversed with his sable brethren in French, not one of the English understood what was said, and he was enabled to impress the tale so strongly on the minds of his hearers, that there was no fear of their forgetting it; and though they might jumble some of the parts together, yet Madame Brienot would understand that her old steward and her protégé were prisoners in the hands of the English—for he did not wish his mistress to learn that he was serving under British colours.

CHAPTER II.

“ Oh! that a man should put an enemy in his mouth, to steal away his brains.”

It was not till the latter part of the afternoon that they caught any thing like a breeze, and then it came steady and strong, and the schooner flew through the smooth water with the velocity of a dolphin, leaving Hamilton and the sloop far astern. But by this time the seamen had indulged so frequently in their applications to the rum, that many of them were in a state of helpless intoxication; nor was the master's mate sober enough to exercise a sound and wholesome discretion. Of the whole party, Johnson and the marines were the only persons who retained their faculties unimpaired; and the coxswain and the corporal were fully engaged in keeping the prisoners in subjection, as well as preventing their shipmates exercising an uncontrolled license over unarmed men. In fact, the liquor had deprived them of self-government, and

in their mad career they would have perpetrated acts of violence and brutality utterly disgraceful and discreditable to human beings. Nor was this all the evil they had to counteract ; for, in several instances, the seamen had carelessly thrown their arms about the deck, which would have been instantly seized by the captive privateer's-men, and used for the purpose of offence as well as defence, but for the watchful eyes of the coxswain and the soldiers. At length the prisoners were sent below, and a sentry placed over the hatchway, with orders to shoot the first that should attempt to come upon deck without permission.

Quaco had not refrained from the wine, but he was certainly not inebriated, and the quantity he had drank served rather to stimulate than to depress his faculties. He was seated abaft—sometimes talking with and soothing the wounded—occasionally looking at the blue mountains, as they raised their dark summits against the gorgeous tints of an evening sky—and then casting an anxious and earnest gaze towards the sloop that contained his young master. Every now and then he broke out into snatches of songs, and his own peculiar merry laugh was heard as he watched the unsteady and deviat-

ing motions of the master's mate. "Haugh, boy," said he, "you neber sabby when me go England noder time, me go for see de king;" and he struck up—

" 'God shabe em Jarge de king,
 Laang lib him nobber king,
 God shabe de king;
 Sen him wiggytoryus,
 Naappy an golious,
 Laang to run ober us;
 God shabe de king.'

Dere den, yer cucurber-shin nigger, you no heeree dat. Nem mind, me go for England 'gain—dere plenny pretty white gal, no care for me hab blaack face. Ky, den me lub em all littlee bit so much. Quaco get old man now. Garamercie! when me young fles an blood—dat de time!—all em blaack lady come for make lub to Quaco." Again he sung with infinite humour the following *elegant* ditty:—

Miss Celia be bot slim an tall,
 An she look like a mawma Venus;
 An she dance wid me at a dignity ball,
 But dere neber be noting atween us.
 Miss Julie she tan tiff and sleek,
 An her eye shine bright like a dollar;
 But her tongue, Garamercie! let nobody peak,
 And she beat massa parson hollow.

When Sunday come, den me bedeck,
Me neber let nobody laugh at ;
Me hab me top-boot, round me neck,
Me white frill sart and craabat :
And den me meet Miss Cackerine,
In a white beaber haat an feader—
Oh! she look to me more neat an fine
Dan em Graces hammered togeder.

Dere, boy, what him tink o' dat? Tan littlee bit
—hab drop more wine—drink em health for Massa
Earwig."

"No, no, Quaco," said Johnson, addressing him
in an under-tone, so as not to reach the ears of those
around him; "no, no—do not drink any more. I
must just get you to take the helm; for, look your-
self, there's Bill Simmons can't make out the north
from the south, and it has been hard up and hard
down with him this half-hour past, and he's the
soberest among em. If these Crapoos break adrift
—and they seems inclined to do so—some of our
shipmates 'ull have more water than grog. Come,
Quaco, Bill's shoved his head in the binnacle to
look at the compass, and find out what course she's
on."

Bill had, indeed, "shoved his head in the bin-
nacle;" but it was not a voluntary act—for, not-

withstanding the gripe he held of the tiller, it had slipt away from his hands, and he had fallen prostrate. Quaco readily superseded him, and, sensible of the hazardous situation they were in, he at once determined to drink no more, but attend with promptitude to his steering. "Neber fear, Massa Johnson," said he, seriously; "you keep em Frenceman in atween deck, me take care 'cooner no go crooked course."

"There's a sowl!" exclaimed the coxswain; "I know'd I could depend upon you." He then stooped, and laid hold of the fallen man to drag him away. "Halloo, Bill, rouse and bitt; how's her head—eh?"

"How's her head?" hiccupped the drunken man; "well, then, I'm bless'd if I can tell you, unless you howlds a lantern over the bows for me to see by; for it's been so dark for the last hour I arn't never seed it at all."

To run close into an enemy's port in such a state as both the officers and the men were, would have been unpardonable rashness; but still what was to be done? There they were, careering on with a brisk breeze, and the beautiful vessel cleaving the water, as it rose in white foam beneath her fore-

foot, and hissed along her sides in fleecy whiteness. Herrick tried to walk the deck; but his staggering grew worse and worse, and he was frequently compelled to cling to the main-shrouds for support—fully indicating the debasing position of betweenity he had acquired; and the coxswain knew, from past experience, how useless it was to employ persuasion or remonstrance to counteract his drunken stubbornness, or as it was styled by the captain's clerk, his “dictionary moods;” for at such seasons the master's mate indulged in all the hard and cramp words he could muster in his storm-dried brain, without the slightest attention to a right appropriation.

Had Johnson endeavoured to dissuade the master's mate from running in, it would have made the latter more determined in accomplishing it; and had he thwarted his designs, it would have irritated him beyond bounds; and he plainly saw how utterly futile it was to assume the command with a crew of intoxicated men, who, in their drunken fraternity, would be more ready to side with the views of their officer, though it should lead them to destruction, for the purpose of evidencing their own sobriety. Besides, he was well aware what a ticklish

experiment it was to deprive an officer of his authority, even in self-preservation—a thing seldom or ever countenanced by superiors, who, in the event of a court-martial, would have to sit in judgment on the offender.

Still, to run recklessly into the enemy's mouth was rather more than Johnson's usual equanimity of temper could endure. He felt confident that nothing could save them from capture, if once beneath the guns of the batteries Quaco had mentioned; and if captured, immediate death, or, what was worse, lingering out a few days in a wretched dungeon, was inevitable. The corporal also felt uneasy, and repeatedly urged the coxswain to take the charge upon himself; but the latter saw the total impracticability of the thing, and was fully sensible that they would have quite enough to do to restrain the turbulence of the prisoners, and keep them from making an attack, instead of being divided amongst themselves, and giving the privateer's men an easy victory.

Under these circumstances, Johnson had recourse to Quaco, hoping that the "natral inkstink of the nigger" would help him out of the dilemma; and, therefore, he placed himself by his side, and in a

few words pointed out to him the risk they were incurring in running in for the land ; “and,” added he, “you sabby ould man, that you as pilot have charge o’ the craft. Now, if you can ounly persuade Muster Herrick to lay-to till midnight, so as to shove her nose in under the cover of the darkness, why you know, by that time, some on em may get *cobblus mentus*, and be able to attend to their duty ; and if he won’t agree to it, why then, ould boy, you must give up charge.”

Now Quaco required no information relative to the difficulty they were likely to be involved in, and had he been differently situated, it is probable that he would have increased rather than diminished it, so that he might obtain a better chance of getting ashore. But he had been revolving the affair over in his own mind, and apprehensions of personal hazard determined him ; the fact of his serving under the British flag at the taking of the sloop and privateer, could not be concealed, and he knew that, such was the hatred of the French against anything English, nothing could save him from condemnation as a traitor, should he fall into the hands of the commissioners, though it was far more probable that he should be put to death imme-

diately on his landing. There was also another thing to prompt his decision, and, to do him justice, it must be stated that it had a powerful influence in directing his future course, and that was young Hamilton.

“ A negro has a soul, an’t please yer honor,” said Corporal Trim to my Uncle Toby ; and certain it is that Quaco not only had a soul, but also from that soul emanated warm affections towards his young master ; and, having once more found him, he felt no inclination to part again, although a suspicion now and then crossed his mind that the sloop, which was a considerable distance astern, would soon change masters. This was grounded on the expectation that the two men in charge would get drunk as their shipmates had done, and then Hamilton and the French crew would overpower them, retake the vessel, and stand in direct for the land, so as to run her ashore.

“ Well, Quaco, will you do it ?” urged Johnson, after he had given the negro a few minutes to consider the proposition.

“ Tan, Massa Johnson, littlee bit,” said the black complacently ; “ no use do anyting while ’em grog aboard. You no see ’em, Massa Earwig, walk all

same one craab—ebery body but sodger cranky de coup. Wharra, den? tell him corporal roll em caax, bung down, rum go, debbil drink go—bery good. Now, hearee, you please.”

“Mind your helm, you black scorpion! do *you* hear?” shouted the master’s mate, from holding on by the main-shrouds. “You’ll get fum-fum presently.”

“Me hearee, Massa Earwig,” responded the negro, in perfect good-humour; “you no see me ’teer de ’cooner good.”

“Steer her magnificently, you thunder-cloud!” hiccupped the master’s mate; “and don’t have any ambigerousness about it, nor get perambulatory in the gammon yer pitching into ould Johnson’s rare-factions.”

“Ky what he call me names for, Massa Earwig!” exclaimed the black; “me neber bumblatory faction for ’fend *you*, saar!”

“Howld yer spasmology, yer cantankerous ink-bottle,” said the mate, “and don’t presume to overhaul yer discoursation with an officer in his Majesty’s sarvice of my long standing and axperience, and you no better than a homageable animal.”

“Tan littlee bit you please, Massa Earwig,” said Quaco; “’cooner run too fast; ’top till he come dark night for run in—me no sabby de land by de daylight.”

“He’ll hardly hoist that in,” whispered the coxswain to the negro, and then speaking out himself —“Muster Herrick, Quaco says that about midnight ’ull be the best time to run in, and we shan’t be suspected by the craft as we’ve got to bring out; and then there’s the sloop a long way astarn. So, with all due humblification, I thinks as soon as it gets a little darker we had better heave-to for a couple of hours.”

“Oh, that’s the luckybration you’ve come to is it?” inquired Herrick, staggering towards them; “then I tell you we’ll not have no such traverse worked when I command! Keep her her course yer lump of jet, and leave it to my conflagetation to manage the rest.”

“But, Massa Earwig, it no possib for me take charge o’ de ’cooner for run in till bery dark,” remonstrated Quaco.

“And why not? isn’t it superwenient to see your way, rather than be digging for daylight with your jib-boom in the bush?” argued the master’s mate.

“ Well, Massa Earwig, ebery genelman tink a someut for hesef,” pleaded Quaco, luffing the vessel more off the shore ; “ me blaak man see more better in de dark.”

During this short dialogue Johnson had withdrawn from the quarter-deck to seek the corporal, to whom he entrusted the operation of sluing the liquor-cask bung downwards, and it was not long before it was accomplished ; whilst, Quaco declaring he would not take charge unless the mate waited a couple of hours, the officer, drunk as he was, had yet sense enough left to yield the point, and the schooner was brought to the wind.

In the mean time the two men, left with Hamilton in the sloop, very fortunately for them had nothing of an intoxicating quality aboard, and, consequently, remained perfectly sober. The youth freely conversed with them, and nothing occurred to disturb their tranquillity. The breeze freshened, and they joined the schooner that was lying-to for them to come up, and Quaco was delighted to find that his young master was safe and still in company.

Mr. Herrick had seated himself on a sail near the companion and fallen asleep, as were also most of

the men, and Johnson with the marines, and two or three seamen, who had partially recovered from the effects of inebriation, were vigilantly engaged in watching over the prisoners. It was somewhere about four bells in the first watch, that Quaco obtained Johnson's sanction to take the schooner's punt and board the sloop to see "him young massa." This he accomplished without aid, as the vessels were close together; and both were much gratified at the interview. The negro assured Hamilton of the utter hopelessness of his expectations to get on shore, and seriously advised him to submit with a good grace, now he was under the flag of his proper country; for there was no telling what the master's mate might report to the captain of the *Glasso'whisky*, who was a strange sort of being. The youth saw the justice of Quaco's reasoning, but, still desirous of further information, he prevailed upon his black friend to scull him to the schooner, so that he might hold some converse with the coxswain on the subject.

"I tell you what it is, young genelman," said the veteran, as soon as he had heard the youth's statement, "the black fellow's right in what he says; not that I'm thinking his knowledge o' things

is so uniwersally ship-shape as a man's to whom the Almighty has given reason and judgment in the way of argifying matters with hisself, but then there's a sort of natur about them there dark-skinned niggers as puts human calkelations at defiance; they comes into the world naked and bare, and so natur takes 'em into her school, which is someut like that of a parish consarn—they as has got any gumption in 'em larns a little of every thing off-hand, and, being without book edecation, they works their traverses by rule o' thumb. Muster Herrick, won't let you go ashore"—

"I'll see him —— first!" exclaimed the person alluded to, who had just awoke from his heavy slumber, and caught the latter part of the coxswain's address. But he said no more, for, after two or three restless shiftings of the head, he again composed himself to sleep.

"Him, Massa Earwig, hab he eye shut an' he ear open," uttered Quaco, in an under tone; "oberseer nap dat," and the negro grinned.

"And now, Quaco," said Johnson, "we'll wear round, and stand in shore, as I'm thinking they'll be all square by the lifts and braces by that time, and, having no more grog aboard, they'll just fight

the divel himself to get a tooth-full o' stuff. As for you, young genelman, if you'll take the advice of an ould tar, it's just to make yourself useful in any way as you can. You says you believe you hail from ould England ; now, if so be as that 'ere's the case, why in course it stands in the nat'ral consequences o' things that you're an Englishman ! and what Englishman, but an infarnal traitor, would lift a cutlash or point a gun again his countrymen ?"—

“ But I'm not positive as to what nation I belong,” argued Hamilton ; “ and even if England is my native land, I have been so many years away from it as to become somewhat naturalized to the one which has adopted me.”

“ Nat'ralized !” exclaimed the old tar, indignantly ; “ what, a right arnest born'd Englishman be transmogrified into a nat'ralized Crapoo ?” He turned his quid, ejected the juice from his mouth, and then contemptuously uttered the word “ Gammon.”

“ Excuse my interfering, young man,” said the corporal of marines, “ but may I be allowed to ask whether the lady who adopted you is a royalist or a republican in principles—does she side with the Jacobins, or remain true to the Bourbons ?”

“She is a decided royalist, and adheres most sacredly to the cause of the fallen monarch’s family,” answered Hamilton.

“Then, young man, whether you are English or French, if you hold the same views as your benefactress, you must be sensible that the Bourbons are still the allies of England,” remarked the corporal; “and, therefore, you can have no part nor lot in the matter with the republican commissioners at Port-au-Prince. They are equally opposed to the British and the royalists of France, who are now united in one common bond, consequently your position with us is by no means doubtful, unless you choose to render it so by declaring yourself a Jacobin.”

“Garamercie ! hear ’em, dat buckra dere !” exclaimed Quaco, in admiration ; but, suddenly changing his tone, he added—“All bery true, Massa Corporal, me tink o’ dat when me get aboard man-of-war noder time.”

The argument of the corporal, added to his own inclinations, induced the youth to decide in favour of joining his countrymen, and he trusted to something or other occurring to render him instrumental in saving Madame Brienot. One of the wounded

prisoners was well known to him, for he had on some former occasion treated the man with great kindness, and to him he especially entrusted a message to his benefactress, urging her to try and get to the Spanish capital, San Domingo, and from thence to cross to Porto Rico, where Captain Wise would cheerfully afford her a passage to the United States, and afterwards she might proceed to England or France, as suited best with her own wishes.

The schooner was now drawing well in with the land, which frowned loftily above her, the dark summits being boldly traced against the intense blue sky of midnight studded with myriads of gems. "Sail, oh!" sung out one of the seamen, and a large ship was distinctly seen on the weather quarter, standing on in nearly the same course as themselves; but, owing to the schooner being more in shore, she was not visible to the ship. Johnson handled the glass with intense attention, and then, without saying a word, he passed it to Quaco, who gave a short glance, and quietly returned it.

"And what do you make of her, ould nigger-head?" inquired the coxswain "Is she a ship, or a brig, or a hurricane house?"

“Em ship—ebery body know dat,” answered Quaco; “you no see em tree mast?—large ship, too.”

“Do you think it’s the Glasso’wisky, ould woolly pate?” continued Johnson, in a tone of good-humour.

“Em no Glasso’wisky dere,” answered Quaco, merrily; “em plenny glass o’ rum, dough—an sugar an coffee.”

“Aye, aye, my boy, an armed French marchan-man, mayhap,” said the coxswain; “she is going to make a run of it for the grand nation—or, maybe, a Yankee trader.”

“Is she barque-rigged?” asked Hamilton eagerly; “will you allow me to have a peep at her? It may be the Ebenezer.”

“Him no Heabysneezer dat, Monsieur Ami,” said Quaco, as he altered the schooner’s course, so as to close with the stranger.

“What is she then, ould friend?” inquired Johnson with assumed carelessness—“a cotton-logie, or a cane-mill?”

“Massa Johnson sabby well what em ’tis,” responded the black; “and now ebery body turn out for retake him.”

“I believes you’re right, my ouzel,” returned

the coxswain ; “ she’s a Jemakermun, and as pretty a recapture as we could wish for. But where’s the fellow as took him ?—Muster Herrick !” shouted he, shaking the master’s mate roughly by the collar—“ Muster Herrick, here’s a good prize for us, sir.” But Mr. Herrick did not arouse till after repeated shakings, and then he was more than half stupid. “ Here’s an enemy in sight, sir !” urged Johnson.

“ D—the enemy !” grumbled the master’s mate ; “ let me have my snooze out, and call me when we’re alongside of him.”

Johnson troubled him no further, but immediately bustled about amongst the men to ascertain in what condition they were for a bit of fighting, if it should be found necessary to engage. Numbers of them were recovering, but enervated by debauch and quarrelling, as each attributed to the others the capsizing of the rum-cask. He got together ten, with the marines, and he determined to take the pinnace and lay her right in the ship’s track, so as to board them unawares. But, first of all, he secured the prisoners below, and clapped the hatches over them. Then once more rousing the master’s mate, he tried to make him understand his position ;

but the poor creature was attacked with *delirium tremens*, so as to render him incapable of energy, or even barely comprehending where he was.

No time, however, was to be lost if they purposed effecting the capture of the supposed West Indianman by stratagem.—“And now, young genelman,” said Johnson, addressing Hamilton, “seeing as we’ve no officer, and you stand in a predicklement sort of no man’s fashion in regard o’ your colours, why, if you likes to take command o’ the boarding party, there’s not none on em as shall say ‘black’s the white of yer eye;’ and mayhap it may do somut for you when you gets under ould Pilgarlick’s lee in the Glasso’wisky. At all events, you shan’t want a friend in ould Johnson. What do you say to it?”

“I should indeed be ungrateful, if I did not most sincerely thank you for your proposal,” returned Hamilton.

“Gammon!” ejaculated the veteran, with a peculiarly expressive emphasis; “nobody axed you for any fal-lal palaver. Will you go, or not?”

“Most assuredly I will go,” responded the youth; “and if you will instruct me how to proceed—”

“Aye, aye, that’s what I’ll do, never fear,” ut-

tered the coxswain ; “ catch a weasel asleep, if you can. But bear a hand.”

“ Em all ready for go,” exclaimed Quaco, presenting Hamilton with a brace of pistols and a cutlass ; “ you neber see him fight de debil noder time up dere ;” and the negro pointed to the mountains with his chin. “ We all ready now, Massa Johnson.”

“ No, no, Quaco—you must stop on board the schooner with one of the jollies,” directed the coxswain ; “ the craft mustn’t be left to the marcy of Providence. Rouse the men out as well as you’re able ; close the ship as soon as you can ; and if we gets possession, the young genelman ull shew two lights, one over the other. Now, if you don’t see them, I’ll fire a couple of muskets from the boat, and you must come and pick us up—hear’ee, boy ?”

“ Ees, Massa Johnson, me hear em,” answered the black, with well-affected chagrin ; for he did not altogether like the hazard of going, and considered himself safest in the schooner. “ But ’pose him, Massa Earwig, for trouble me ?”

The coxswain assured him that he could meet with no interruption from Herrick, who was in a state of imbecility ; and after some further instruc-

tions the pinnace shoved off, and Hamilton, in the most unexpected manner, found himself incurring a responsibility that he was in a great measure unacquainted with. But Johnson encouraged him by advice in language which, however rough, had honesty and benevolence as dictators. Their conversation was carried on in whispers—for the utmost silence was observed; and the oars having been muffled from the first, the boat flew noiselessly along till it attained the precise spot that Johnson's well-practised eye informed him the ship must pass over, or very near to.

“ You, jollies,” said the coxswain, “ must do most of the cutting and killing work, taking into your reckoning the possibility of resistance.—You, Jones and Transom, must clap the hatches on the moment you have orders. As for the rest, let them stick by this young genelman; and I'm blessed but you'll find me as close in his wake as a rudder fish!” Other orders were given, with strict injunctions to obedience.

The party in the pinnace, with Hamilton and the coxswain, just made a dozen, well armed, and most of them eager for any contest that might take place. It was evident that the ship had not yet made

out the schooner, even if any one on board had seen her; for she stood boldly on, the pinnace laying right ahead of her, just steadied with steerage-way by the oars. At length the wash of waters was heard under her bows; and "Stand by, my men!" uttered Hamilton, prompted by old Johnson. The response, "Ay, ay, sir—all ready!" had scarcely been uttered; the pinnace was holding her own, so as not to make any shock in going alongside; no hail had been heard; not a soul was to be seen—when the bowmen caught hold of the lee fore-sheet, and in a few seconds every soul had made good his footing in either the main or the fore-channels, wholly unperceived. Indeed, except the helmsman and one individual walking the deck, no other person was visible.

"Now then, young genelman, take the lead," whispered Johnson to Hamilton; "I'll be close aboard of you. Don't fire unless there's right arnest occasion for it; but just capsize that ere chap as is walking the deck, and then ax him civilly where he comes from. Now shout 'Away!' and you'll see some fun."

"Away, my lads—away!" shouted Hamilton springing through the port on to the quarter-deck,

and with the butt-end of one of his pistols levelling the person who had been pointed out to him with the deck. Johnson ran to the wheel, and secured the steersman, who uttered a "Sacre !" but made no resistance. The seamen and marines cleverly performed their part of the duty ; and in less than five minutes, without the shedding of a drop of blood, these fortunate youths had recaptured a fine ship, of nearly four hundred tons, which had been taken by a French man-of-war brig, formerly belonging to the English as a gun-brig, but had fallen into the hands of a frigate squadron, from which she could not escape

The prize-crew, eight in number, were no match for the Glasco'wisky's, had they come to blows ; and sleeping as they were, five of them on deck and three below, the conquest was achieved with the utmost ease. They also found two of her own crew on board, who of course were extremely rejoiced at their rescue. They stated that "they had fallen in with the brig that previous afternoon, and supposing her to be an English gun-brig, as she had a blue British ensign and pennant flying, they had not avoided her ; nor did they discover their mistake till the captain went on board of her, when, with his

boat's crew, they found themselves prisoners, and the ship became an easy prize. The brig was still out upon her cruise, expecting a few more laden vessels, when she proposed running in again for her people. To Johnson's surprise, they had seen nothing of the Glasso'wisky, so as to recognize her; but, in the morning part of the day, they had discovered a ship in chase of a suspicious-looking vessel standing to the north-west.

"Order two lights in the main rigging parpendicularly, if you please," whispered Johnson to Hamilton; "that's the signal, you'll bear in mind, as was to bring the schooner down to us."

"Two lanterns, one over the other, in the star-board main-rigging!" shouted Hamilton; and immediately the men belonging to the ship, one of whom was the second mate, hastened to obey the command. But, before the lights were displayed, the flashes of musketry were seen and the reports came smartly upon the ear, so as to shew that the privateer was at no great distance.

"Ay, I thought as much," uttered Johnson; "they've got to loggerheads in the schooner, and now some on em 'ull pay for getting drunk. Well, it's no fault of ourn; there's Muster Herrick and

six hands in the schooner to look out for squalls ; and if so be as they stitches theirselves up, why that's their consarn."

" But, Quaco !" uttered Hamilton ; " I hope nothing will occur to injure the black. Do you really think the Frenchmen have risen ?"

" We shall know better presently, young gentleman," responded the coxswain, who had been called to a proper sense of his duty. " Order the men into the boat, Muster ——, what's your name ?"

" Ami, or Hamilton Brienot," returned the youth with quickness ; and then his voice was heard in a louder strain, " Away, lads, to the boat—away !"

" Sing out, ' Man the pinnace, and bear a hand ! ' " said Johnson, in a low tone, addressing the youth ; " we must shove off, and see what them fellows are arter."

Hamilton complied—the men promptly obeyed—and taking four of the Frenchmen into the boat, and lashing the other four, with their hands behind them, to the ring-bolts on the deck, two of the English seamen were left with the two belonging to the ship ; and with nine effective hands they gave way for the schooner, where the noise of strife continued unabated. In a very few minutes they

were alongside ; and this time Hamilton did not wait to be told to take the lead—for, springing into the main-chains as soon as the boat touched, he shouted “Follow me !” and climbing over the bulwark, was instantly on the quarter-deck. At first, he could scarcely distinguish friend from foe ; but the voice of Quaco, exclaiming, “Yer haangman coquin !” directed him towards the spot, where his black friend had fallen beneath a heavy blow from a handspike, which his opponent was preparing to repeat, when a ball from the youth’s pistol averted the aim, and the negro was saved. A smart hand-to-hand contest ensued ; but the prowess of the British prevailed, and the enemy again subdued, though not till four of the man-of-war’s men had yielded up their *spirit*—and this in a literal sense, for they had drank so much rum as to render them but little else. Quaco and the others were severely though not dangerously wounded. As for Herrick, he laid much in the position in which he had been left, but was now—a corpse !

It appeared that, shortly after the departure of the pinnace, a quarrel occurred between two of the seamen left behind, relative to a small quantity of spirits, which one of them had been told was secreted

down forward, and the noise brought others to the scene of controversy, when, in the true recklessness of drunkards, they determined to take off the hatches and overhaul for it. Quaco strongly remonstrated against the removal of the hatches; but a kick and a cuff were the only responses that he got, and he again took his station at the helm. During his temporary absence, however, one of the wounded prisoners had contrived to shift his berth to the side of the master's mate, where he laid concealed beneath the sail, so that the negro did not detect him. The two men who had quarreled removed the hatches and went down below, but were almost immediately seized by the prisoners, who made a rush to ascend, but were beaten back by those on deck. Quaco once more quitted the tiller; and, uncovering the master's mate, beheld the lurking foe at his side, and with one stroke of his cutlass deprived him of existence. He took hold of Herrick to arouse him, but, on lifting him from the deck, found that the head of the unfortunate master's mate was nearly severed from his body—an assassination that had been perpetrated by the villain whose life Quaco had taken. Letting the corpse fall with a shudder of horror, the negro ran forward, and joined the

only two who were left alive, and now were obstinately disputing the passage of the hatchway. They had discharged their fire-arms with fatal precision; but the prisoners, knowing that there were only three left to contend against, persisted in the attack; and this number was reduced to two, by one of the British, who had not yet recovered from the giddiness of intoxication, stumbling over the combing and falling down amongst them, where he was at once sacrificed. This accident, however, enabled Quaco and his assistant to clap the hatch over, though not to secure it; for it was shortly afterwards forced off again, and the Frenchmen, having possessed themselves of the dead man's weapons, succeeded in gaining the deck: but the incident had lengthened out the time; and it was at the very moment when Quaco and his companion were on the point of losing their lives, that the pinnacle returned and rescued them from death.

“And now, Muster Brineoh,” said Johnson, “although in good right, and according to hatikit, the command dewolves on me—yet, young genelman, I’m an ould man as’ull soon be hove down for a full due; I’ve neither ould ooman, chick, nor child—

relative nor friend ; and so, if you likes to undertake it voluntarily, the command shall be yourn, and I'll see the dooty done."

" Your conduct is indeed most generous," returned Hamilton ; " but you know I do not belong to the service, and perhaps the men may refuse to obey me."

" Never you fear that," urged the veteran. " Arn't I alongside of you ? And as to your not being in the sarvice, it 'ull be your own fault if you continue long out of it. We arn't got never a young genelman in the ship as is worth a rotten rope-yarn—or else, mayhap, they wouldn't have spoilt a good quarter-master by making Muster Herrick a mate. Now, I'm thinking, you've ounly to blow your nose and look smart, and the skipper 'ull rate you midshipman directly, if so be as you likes to be entered on the ship's books. But we've other things just now to veer and haul upon. Launch the dead overboard at once, and put the wounded into the small boats and send them ashore."

" Do you think the sloop is of sufficient value to take out with us ?" inquired Hamilton ; " she'll

hardly fetch any thing, and two hands will not be sufficient to work her, whilst we shall want more for the ship."

"I arn't overfond o' working traverses, young genelman," uttered Johnson; "why can't you say at once that the skipper has behaved well to you, and you want to set him at liberty? It 'ud do you no discredit."

"Well, my good friend, you certainly have judged correctly of my real feelings," assented Hamilton; "and if you see no impropriety in it, I would put the wounded in her, and send her away with her own people to navigate her; and as the fewer prisoners we have, the less there will be to trouble us, I would also free the Frenchmen we captured in the ship. As for the rest, I'd keep them aboard to go aloft."

"It can't be done not yet," replied the coxswain; "for, to my thinking, Muster Brineoh, as the French brig is still at sea, we may chance to fall in with another recaptur. As for going into Jackymoll, that's all up now; we must dodge about a little while, and then look for the Glasso'whisky. No, no—let the wounded have the small boats, and send who you please to pull em ashore."

The dead were committed to their ocean-grave,

and Hamilton having conversed with the captain of the sloop, frankly told him of the situation of affairs, offering him either to go on shore with the charge of the wounded (whose numbers were considerably increased), or to remain with his vessel, and run the chance of her liberation. He chose the latter. The wounded were sent away with the men who had been taken in the ship—the refractory prisoners were confined below—and the three vessels stood on their course alongshore, but keeping a little more out to sea.

A lovely morning dawned upon the waters, and several sail were seen in different directions; but they were apparently only colonial vessels, and Johnson did not deem it worth while to advise pursuit. They had a pleasant beam-wind; and Hamilton, whilst looking around him, felt not a little proud of his elevation. As the day advanced it fell calm, and they remained stationary till towards evening, when a brisk breeze came down upon them from the southward, and enabled them to make good headway. The schooner sailed remarkably well, nor was the ship far inferior—but the sloop was a dead drag; and at length Hamilton succeeded with Johnson in dismissing her; but under promise from

the captain that he would himself see Madame Brienot, and, having explained every thing to her, would use his best endeavours to get the widow across the island. The remainder of the prisoners were put on board, and she was soon left in the darkness far astern.

Rum had again become abundant from the West-Indiaman; but Hamilton, by Johnson's advice, reasoned with the men on the folly of risking their lives by intoxication, which, though it did not entirely cause them to refrain from the liquor, yet prevented that excess which had before been indulged in; and the force of example in the officer now predominating the other way, also held a powerful check upon the baneful propensity. There was no immediate enemy to apprehend, and the men slept soundly and securely, as the vessels made good a steady progress.

CHAPTER III.

“ C’est la fortune de guerre.”

DAYLIGHT again broke upon the schooner, as, still with a fine southerly breeze, she rattled along with her recapture in company. They were now abreast of Point d’Abacou, and at no great distance from the shore; to windward of them appeared a large ship in chase of a brig, and two minutes’ scrutiny through the glass assured Johnson that one was the Glasso’wisky, and the other he suspected was the Frenchman that had captured the West-Indiaman. They were running in for the land with the wind on their starboard quarter, and were broad away on Le Serpent’s weather bow. Old Johnson stood considering for a minute or two before he spoke; he first looked at the approaching vessels, then scanned his eye along the coast, and, as Hamilton approached him, he observed—

“ There’s more work cut out for us, Muster Bri-

neoh; we shall want the long gun and some pretty practice, else our craft 'ull never catch Johnny Crapoh. Now, take some 'sponsibility on yourself, and let's see what you'll do."

"I'm not seaman enough to direct," returned Hamilton, "but if left to my own judgment, I should place the schooner ahead of the brig, and, as she nears us, try and knock away some of his spars."

"A very sensible conclusion, young genelman," assented the tar, with a pleased expression of countenance. "Then the first thing to be done is to clear away the long-nine"—

"And get the French colours ready for showing abaft," said Hamilton; "we must use a little deception, and not fire till we have him in good range."

"That's supposing he's bothered about his prize, for he'll make her out directly," remarked Johnson. "No—no, Muster Brineoh, we must work up to her boldly at once—the shore's too close to play with her;" he then added, in a whisper, "Sing out, 'trim sails.'"

"Trim sails," shouted Hamilton, and the men promptly obeyed, as the sight of their own ship in chase had quickened their intellects, and like

thorough man-o'-war's men, they saw they had plenty to do.

“Full and by,” said Johnson to the helmsman ; “don't let a sail lift, but give her about half a point free.”

The change in position brought the brig right ahead, and the schooner was tacked more than once or twice, so as not to open her broad away upon either bow. The British sloop of war was not within gun-shot, and seemed to be losing ground, which Johnson attributed to the foulness of her bottom. Nothing could exceed the excitement in Hamilton's breast as the brig drew nigh, and frequently did he inquire whether it was not time to send her a shot. That she was the vessel Johnson supposed admitted of no doubt, though the French had improved upon her since she had fallen into their possession. The West-Indiaman, according to a hail from Johnson, was jogging on in her course, as there was nothing to obstruct her, and there was no occasion for her getting within range of the brig's guns. The Frenchman appeared puzzled what to make of the schooner; several times they altered their course, but Johnson's judicious manœuvres quickly placed her

between the chase and the land. The brig showed French colours, the schooner did the same, but, still the pinnace towing astern, evidently excited suspicions as to her national identity.

“And now, young genelman,” said Johnson, addressing Hamilton, “we’re within very fair range, and you shall have the honour of the first shot ; don’t stand long looking at the sight to get a better eye upon the object, but catch it as quick as you can, and fire without losing an instant—it prevents narvousness.”

Hamilton did as he was desired ; the schooner was kept a little away, and, as she fell off, the quick eye of the youth along the gun caught the precise moment to fire ; he was enveloped in smoke, but a cheer from the men told him the shot had taken effect ; and, as soon as the atmosphere became clear, he saw the brig’s foretop gallant mast hanging down before the foretopsail, which it had split from the head-rope to the foot.

“Ve-ry fair,” said old Johnson, with a look of extreme gratification, as he stood with his thumb on the vent ; “you’ve taken in some of his canvas pretty handsomely, and now he’s luffing up to thank you. Spunge out the gun, you lubber, and bear a hand ;

this is no time to be thinking. Ah, there it comes."

Wreaths of smoke curled under the brig's bows, and the next instant a shot rebounded from the surface of the water, and came crashing through the schooner's bulwark, and passed over her stern, without doing any other injury ; but the nine-pounder was again loaded, and Johnson himself took the match. "Port a little with a small helm," shouted he, as he cast his eye along the sight ; "there, steady so—starboard again—now I have her happy-go-lucky," and away flew the shot, followed by another cheer. "It's his maint'gallan mast," remarked the coxswain, again applying his thumb to the touch-hole, whilst one of the men sponged the gun.

"No—Massa Johnson ! no, he main t'gant mast dis time," said Quaco, who had crawled upon deck ; "take in him 'tudding sels, saar."

The smoke cleared away, and the lower studding sail of the brig was seen towing in the water, whilst the topmast studding sail was flying away without being of the least utility. Again a gun from the brig sent a swift messenger to the schooner, who was now within pistol-shot ; but it was wide of the mark and flew past them harmless, though a

volley of musketry told with effect upon her sails, and wounding two of the men.

“Put in round and grape,” said the coxswain, “and ram well home; lay down all of you, we shan’t have a hand to spare. There goes the ould sloop,” and the smoke from the Glasso’ whisky showed that she was trying the range, whilst a crashing noise in the brig gave evidence that she had effectually attained it. “Well done, my tight-uns,” continued Johnson, rubbing his hands together. “Córporal, just get your jollies, and pick off some of those fellows aloft. Keep her away a little more, Tom Sansom—that ’ull do; now, lads, slue round the breech o’ this here gun, and, Muster Brineoh, would you like to try it again?”

Hamilton once more took the match, and the brig being now closer, he depressed the muzzle of his piece, pointed it right blank at her figure-head, and fired. The report still vibrated amongst the canvas, when piercing shrieks came down upon the wind, evidencing its deadly effect, and a shout from Quaco proclaimed that the shot had passed over her head, and knocked away her main-boom.

“Down—down, every soul of you!” exclaimed Johnson, catching hold of Hamilton’s arm and

forcing him to the deck ; “ he’s rounding-to—we shall have his broadside directly ; it’s his last kick, and it ’ull be sink or swim with us. This is sommut different to playing at marbles, young genelman.”

The men laid themselves flat on the deck as the iron storm rushed over them ; and the rending of canvas and chattering of the sticks, as well as the crashing of the planks, as the shot tore them up, verified the coxswain’s prediction. Up sprang Johnson and his young protégé, to witness their schooner almost a wreck, and to see two poor fellows with their limbs quivering in the last death-pang. But the brig’s main-topsail was laid to the mast, and her colours no longer flaunted the breeze ; she had perpetrated the last act of vindictive vengeance, and instantly struck.

“ Hurrah !” shouted Hamilton, wrought up to a pitch of extreme excitement. “ She’s our’s, my boys ; and now, Johnson, shall we take the boat, and board her ?”

“ No ! no ! Muster Brineoh,” answered the coxswain, looking pleasedly at the capture ; “ it will be best to leave her for the skipper to man-handle ; he’ll take it as a bit of respectfulness and it ull tell in your favour when you gets aboard.”

The sloop of war came boldly on under her canvas, and soon ranged up to windward of the brig, the schooner having by this time contrived to place herself about a cable's length to leeward of her. A boat, from the royal craft, swept rapidly through the waters, and the only lieutenant (the other having been invalided home) of the king's ship took possession of *Le Renard*, of fourteen guns and eighty men.

Johnson and his young friend, or rather *protégé*, hastened with the wounded to the *Glasso'wisky*; where, on the quarter-deck, Hamilton found a remarkably corpulent and venerable old man, in an undress captain's uniform—his white hair came streaming from under his broad brimmed straw hat and spreading over the collar of his coat, and there was a look of mild benevolence on his weather-beaten countenance that spoke well for the general feelings of his heart. But there was no decrepitude, no weakness observable in his frame—in fact, he resembled an antique piece of oak furniture, that bore every semblance of age without having lost the smallest portion of its utility or strength.

Near the captain stood another veteran, in a

round uniform jacket and with a thorough Jack-tar cast of features—he was not so far advanced in life as his superior, and the ruby complexion of his nasal organ, which capaciously expanded itself in an eccentric shape, assuming something of the appearance of a red lion rampant, told of his spirituous devotion to Bacchus. This was the sailing master of the ship—a seaman of the old Benbow school, who had no idea of this world or the next that was unconnected with his nautical experience.

In various parts of the deck were two or three young midshipmen, whose yellow-tinged cadaverous faces gave evidence of recent sickness, whilst most of the crew manifested the lassitude and biliousness of a West India climate—they had not long recovered from the yellow fever.

Old Johnson walked steadily up to the captain, and, pulling off his hat, simply uttered, “Come aboard, sir!” He then stood still at a respectful distance, and remained silent.

“Haugh!” exclaimed the person addressed, folding his hands behind him, so as to give a more extensive bow-window protuberance to his front. “Haugh! and pray where is Mr. Herrick, eh? Has he no better sense of etiquette than to send

the coxswain of the pinnace to report proceedings ?
I have my suspicions—where is he, sir ?”

“ Muster Herrick is aboard the schooner, sir,” answered the seaman, shaking his head and fixing his gaze upon the deck with a rueful aspect ; “ I’m sorry to say, your honour, that unfortunately he’s obnibulated.”

“ Hob—what ?” shouted the captain, in a tone and manner mingling anger with contempt. “ Curse that fellow, he’ll infect the whole ship’s company with his jaw-breaking words. Do you mean that he is drunk ?”

“ Dead, yer honor,” returned Johnson, with another melancholy shake of his head, “ quite dead.”

“ The scoundrel,” muttered the captain, “ a pretty pass the service is coming to—dead drunk, eh ? I’ll cut off his buttons—unofficer him—no more long togs and frilled shirts—he shall return to his old station again.”

“ He’ll not never return to nothing, yer honor,” mournfully ejaculated the coxswain, as he squeezed the rim of his hat together, so as to give the article the appearance of a bag.

“ But he shall return, sir,” insisted the naval chief, giving the worthy seaman a look of defiance.

“Who is there that dare presume to controvert my orders—which among you will have the temerity to disobey my commands? I say he shall resume his station before the mast!”

Once more the seaman, who had never raised his eyes from the deck, gave another shake of his head. “He’s a long way a-head of all that, sir,” said he. “Ax the young genelman there.”

“Haugh! and pray who is the young gentleman, as you call him?” enquired the captain rather haughtily, as he glanced at the youth.

“It’s Muster Brineoh, as took the West Ingeeman, and fout the schooner, arter Muster Herrick was killed, sir,” responded the coxswain earnestly, but respectfully.

“Killed!” exclaimed the commander, in surprise; “what poor Herrick killed?—poor fellow—why didn’t you tell me of it at once, Johnson, and I should have been spared the pain of reviling his memory. Come here, young gentleman.”

Hamilton advanced to the captain’s front, and was introduced by old Johnson, who related the events that had occurred from beginning to end, in a plain unvarnished manner, dwelling warmly and

energetically on the meritorious conduct of the youth.

“Haugh! young gentleman,” said the veteran chief, “you have acted gallantly, sir—very gallantly; and I honour you for it. Your friends will be pleased to hear of your behaviour.”

“Friends, sir?” reiterated Hamilton, whilst an unusual sickness of heart crept over him. “Alas, sir, I have no friends.”

“Eh? what? no friends?—haugh—that’s hard too. You are an orphan, then, I suppose?” uttered the commiserating man.

“I cannot tell, sir,” returned the youth, mournfully; “my parentage, even my birth-place, is unknown to me. The only individual who, to my knowledge, has ever befriended me, is a titled lady, now a prisoner by order of the commissioners at Port au Prince.”

“The nigger, yer honor, as we got out of the pirate, overhauled the consarn upon his trial at Kingston, as yer honor ’ull remember,” explained Johnson. “’This young genelman was in the brig the thieves plundered the night we saw ’em. He was left alone desarted on the ocean—was wrecked—”

“Haugh! no long yarns, old man,” said the cap-

tain; "he shall tell me all himself by and bye, when we've shifted the prisoners. But as you have been mainly instrumental to our capturing the brig, young man, I am desirous that you should reap some pecuniary advantage from it, which you cannot adequately do without belonging to the ship. You have no friends, it appears, to consult; and if you like to accept of a rating as midshipman, the entry shall be dated so that you may share prize money. I would offer you time to consider of my proposition, but that I should like to send you in charge of the schooner to Jamaica. Johnson shall accompany you; and no doubt both vessels will be bought into the service. Mister Tomlins (the lieutenant) will take in the brig; and as the breeze is light and pleasant, with every symptom of fine weather, one of the youngsters shall bring the recapture with a good prize crew. Go, young gentleman, consider of what I have proposed, but do not be long in deciding. Go, Johnson, take the pinnace, and assist in transporting the prisoners."

"May I ax yer honor's pardon jist for liberty to overhaul a word or two to yer honor 'afore I goes?" enquired Johnson, who still stood hat in hand.

"Not a syllable, my man, till your duty is per-

formed," returned the captain; "I have many questions to ask you when you come back, but let us get every thing in proper order before we expend a moment on unimportant matters."

The seaman put his hand to his bare forehead, and turned away; but stopped a moment to address the master. "Would Muster Wetsel be good enough jist to advise the youngster what tack to stand upon? The poor lad 'ull be ducking about in his notions of things like a gull in a squall, if he'd no friendly wing to help him top the comb of the sea."

"Bear a hand in the boat, old man," returned the master, kindly, "or else, I'm thinking, you'll be like a gull in a squall presently, if Captain Tyrrell observes you backing and filling arter this fashion. I'll see to the boy, and mayhap a word or two from them as has experience may be of service to him." Johnson turned to the boat, whilst the master walked to the youth. "What cheer, my lad, what cheer?" uttered he.

"There can be but little to cheer the heart, sir," responded Hamilton, sorrowfully, "when it is lonely and desolate."

"Ay, ay, I know all that my boy," said Mr.

Wetsail ; “ and just now you’re sommut like a ship in irons, and can’t see which way she’ll tend. Well, well, I’ve heard a little of your history, and now, any thing I can do to put you on a right tack and in good sailing trim, why say the word.”

“ You are very kind, sir,” said Hamilton ; “ and, as you probably are acquainted that my benefactress is in difficulties at Port au Prince, so I think you will consider it my bounden duty to attempt to rescue her.”

“ All right and proper, my lad ; but when a craft’s on the rocks, it arn’t no way to get her off to run slap alongside of her, and stick fast yourself. You must bring up at a convenient distance, and try to heave her afloat, either by carrying out her own anchor, or letting her get a purchase upon yours. The case stands thus—there’s your object in view, whether it’s sarving a friend or fighting an enemy—every thing rests upon the way you set about it. Now, you want to sarve a friend, and the right calculation is to get the assistance of them as can help you to do it.”

“ Do you think Captain Tyrrell could or would render me his aid ?” asked Hamilton, as a gleam of hope dawned upon him.

“It is not for me exactly to say what he might do,” returned the master, cautiously; “for he steers his craft by his own compass. You have logged yourself in his good feelings on this day’s work, at all events; and he don’t mean you no harm by offering you a rateing. There’s a providence in all things, as the nigger said, when he lost his paddle and drifted out to sea in his canoe during a hurricane; so, young gentleman, there seems to be a providence in what has befallen you.”

“And the only thing, sir, is rightly to understand the best means of taking advantage of it,” observed Hamilton. “If I thought Captain Tyrrell would kindly aid me in trying to obtain the release of Madame Brienot, I would without hesitation and with gratitude embrace his offer.”

“Ay, ay, my boy,” assented the master; “however, you must just balance your sails well when you argue the matter with the captain; and, I say, is this Madame What’s-her-name, a fine woman?”

“She has been very beautiful indeed, in her younger days, and still retains a very commanding person,” answered Hamilton.

“All ship-shape,” remarked Mr. Wetsail, “hand-

some, amiable, generous—I say, mind you stick all that into the skipper. Is she rich?”

“ I have every reason to believe that she has remitted considerable wealth to Europe,” said Hamilton ; “ and purposed, on her arrival, to resume the title of Marchioness.”

“ Whe—ew,” whistled the master, “ it’s a done job—a Marchioness, eh ? Captain Tyrrell will never be able to stand that ; only pay out handsomely, a goodish scope upon doubloons, and dollars, and gold candlesticks, and marchionesses ; now and then taking a severe turn about remains of beauty and overflowing kindness, and you may have it all your own way.”

“ You would not advise me to enter, then ; do I understand you correctly, sir ?” inquired the youth.

“ Not by no manner o’ means correctly,” answered the master ; “ just tell the captain all about it ; not forgetting the doubloons and the Marchioness, fine daylights and good figure-head ; and then ax him to put you on the right tack, for you see, my boy, if he consents to shape your course, why he’s bound in honour to keep the reckoning, so that he mayn’t bump you ashore.”

Now this was perfect Greek to the lad, who

nevertheless believed that it was something meant for kindness. “It is very true, sir,” answered he, “that separated from my benefactress, I am totally destitute, for all I possessed in the world was lost in the Bon Mari; therefore I should be quite unable to discharge any reckoning if I was on shore.”

“In course—in course,” responded the master, equally puzzled at the lad’s meaning; “so, d’ye mind, sway away upon the doubloon purchase, and leave the settling of the matter in his hands. But here comes the prisoners, and now the ship will be like that tower as they rigged out to go aloft to heaven by, but was hove all aback by a confusion of tongues. Well, it does puzzle me, the difference of languages, though, when our parson in the ould Bedford used to be overhauling his Hebrew book, there sartainly did appear to me a goodish supply of comical, out-o’-the-way, no-man’s-land sort of letters, as might be ontwisted, worked up again, and convarted into a good many ship-shape A. B. C’s. Ha!—here they come—confound their jabbering; it seems unnatural and barbarous in a well fitted and well found British cruizer. I do abhor that parley-woo mouthing, though mayhap you have held on so long by it, that you can talk it

without damaging your tongue ; but I'm thinking it must have made your jaws ache at first starting. Well, well, you do as I've told you—just place yourself under his convoy, and he'll see you safe into port, never fear." The old man hurried to superintend the disposal of the prisoners, muttering imprecations against the barbarity of "calling a ship a 'worseoh,' (*vaisseau*;) and a sail a 'whirl,' (*voile*)."

Hamilton was left standing by himself near the Jacob's ladder, when Quaco, who had passed under the surgeon's hands, ascended to the deck in search of him. "Oh me, massa !" exclaimed the gratified black, "him Cappin Tiddle good for you, no ? Ha ! me know him noder time, when he leftenant wid Rodney, and genelman for me, at me massa house in Kington ; tan litlee bit you see," and he endeavoured to attract the captain's attention.

"Well, Quaco," said the chief, "though your wounds are not mortal, I should hope, you have had a great many squeaks for your life?"

"Ees, Massa Cappin ; yer honor, me hab plenny squeak," answered the black ; "nem mind, me fight for my natib land now, and, pose die, go to glorio."

"I do not wish to hurry you in your decision,

young gentleman," said Tyrrell, addressing Hamilton, "but time presses, and I want to complete my arrangements, haugh!"

"May I solicit the favour of a few minutes' counsel, sir," said Hamilton, respectfully; "I am at a loss how to act—but if you will hear what I have to urge, and give me your advice, I will most gratefully follow it."

"Haugh—well—I see no objections to your request," rejoined the captain; "but as it will necessarily occupy time, why you must take breakfast with me, and then we may kill two birds with one stone." Johnson came up and touched his hat. "Haugh! coxswain! Well now, and what is it you wanted to say to me, my man?"

"Jist to inform yer honor that the brig has another prize at sea," returned the seaman; "they captured her afore the one we retook, and the prize-master was ordered to run for Jackymoll; but no one has seen anything of her in the schooner, and in course it's likely she has tried to get round Cape Tuberoon, or got in shore somewhere, so as we might cut her out."

"Very good, my man," rejoined the captain, placing his hands behind him, and standing for two

or three minutes in a ruminating mood. "Mr. Wetsail," shouted he, and the master placed himself before him. "Mr. Wetsail, old Johnson tells me that the brig has another capture at sea, or rather she may be somewhere in shore; now the coast is a dangerous one—are you well acquainted with it?"

"There are many rocks that are not laid down upon our charts, sir," returned the master; "but still I think, with a good look-out, we might keep clear of every thing, and stand close in."

"If yer honor won't be offended at my speaking, I'll make bould jist to shove my oar in by way of exposteration," said Johnson.

"Poor Herrick, he's gone!" mournfully uttered the captain, called to a remembrance of the master's mate by the coxswain's attempt upon the dictionary. "But I must insist upon it that every man, fore and aft, speaks plain English. Heave ahead, sir; what have you got to say?"

"Why, yer honor, in regard o' pilotage, there's not never a better pilot in the whole fleet than the nigger here," said Johnson, whilst Quaco grinned assent to the assertion. "And if so be as yer honor would send me with the young genelman in the schooner, and twenty hands, why I'm thinking it

shan't be for the want of good-will if we don't bring sommut out with us—either a crab or a creole.”

“Haugh, it's worth consideration, Wetsail,” said the captain, addressing the master; “I cannot spare you, as Tomlins is away; and, except the gunner, who will also be wanted now the prisoners are on board, I have no one that I can trust. But come, young gentleman, breakfast is ready, and we'll talk it over. Come to the wind on the lar-board tack, Wetsail, and hail the mast-head to see if there are any strangers in sight.”

Hamilton accompanied the chief to his cabin, and during his repast he related as many of the circumstances connected with his history as were necessary to afford the captain information relating to Madame Brienot; nor did he forget the master's advice relative to the rank and wealth of the lady, which evidently produced the desired effect. He then expressed a wish to place himself entirely at the captain's disposal.

“Haugh—another cup of coffee, young gentleman,” and he handed him the beverage. “You've interested me—greatly interested me; not that I have a regard for anything French—on the contrary, I have a natural dislike to them; and as for

their language, I am astonished that any body can make an oilet hole of their mouths to talk it. But mind me, I do not mean to insinuate anything against you, my boy, but it does seem to me only reasonable to suppose that you are a native of Britain, for you would never have been able to hold on by the English palaver if it had not have been your mother tongue. It is, in fact, what old Johnson calls inkstink. A bird may be taught to whistle tunes by a hand-organ, but never loses its own sweet nat'ral note. At all events, we must make a thorough Englishman of you. We'll have a jolly christening, sir—and haugh—as you've shown yourself a brave lad, why-y I'll stand your godfather. Ay, you shall be baptized in good Madeira, and I must think of a name."

"I should prefer retaining that of my benefactress, sir," said the youth, "at least till I can lay claim to one that I am more entitled to."

"Well! well! we'll think of it," partly assented the kind-hearted officer; "and as for madame—that is—haugh—I mean the marchioness—why, we must try and get her away from the island. You shall have your rating, young gentleman—it will secure your share of prize-money, which will help to rig

you out in uniforms; and if you continue to behave well, why I make no doubt but you will rise in the service. I am an old man, Mr. What's-ye-name, and fortune has not been very kind to me, though I have been sixty years at sea. I'm saying, fortune has never been favourable to me till to-day, and now all her gifts are coming in a lump, holus bolus, as I may say—nor shall I forget that to your ready assistance I am much indebted for our prizes—and therefore, my lad, if there is anything you require, come boldly—but mind, respectfully—haugh—always bear that in remembrance—respectfully—and tell me what it is. I must now have a word or two with Johnson, so, if you have done, you may go on deck and make friends with your new messmates.”

Captain Tyrrell might indeed well say that fortune had been adverse to him—he had served forty years as a lieutenant under some of the bravest officers of the period, and in most of the gallant actions; but, from some cause or other, though chiefly from a want of interest, had always experienced neglect, till when first lieutenant of a smart frigate, the son of the admiral, a youth of nineteen, was appointed acting post to command her, and the

corpulent and orderly first-lieutenant not according with the freaks and caprices of the racketty young captain, the admiral was induced to purchase a prize that had been taken, and converting her into a sloop-of-war, elevated Tyrrell to the rank of master and commander to commission her. This appointment was duly confirmed, and he was subsequently removed to the *Glasso'wisky*, so that at seventy years of age he had risen no higher.

On ascending to the quarter-deck, he informed Mr. Wetsail that he had duly attended to his counsel, and was now a midshipman of the sloop. The master congratulated him upon his decision ; and, calling the reefers to him, the youth was introduced to his future messmates, who received him with great cordiality—though they envied him his good looks and apparent health. Most of them (there were only four) were debilitated and dejected through long sickness, and one little fellow burst into tears at the mention of home—for there was a deep conviction stamped upon his mind that he should never see it again.

Orders arrived from the cabin for a fortnight's provisions for twenty men to be got ready for the schooner, and the carpenter was sent aboard the

schooner to ascertain whether she was worth much. At the same time Hamilton was requested to prepare himself to take command of the privateer.

“ I have nothing to prepare,” said he ; “ except a second shirt, all that I am possessed of in the world is now about me.”

“ You must have a parish fit-out,” exclaimed one of the youngsters. “ I’ll give you a jacket—Benson must launch out a pair of trowsers—Jemmy Wright will find you a waistcoat, and so we can muster enough for present service, with stockings and shirts. But avast ! another thought has struck me ;” and he crossed over to the weather side of the quarter-deck, where (whilst Hamilton was narrating the death of Herrick and the taking of the prizes) he held an earnest conversation with Mr. Wetsail. At length he returned to them, and inquired, “ Do you mind wearing dead men’s shoes ?”

There was something so uncouth and abrupt in the question, that it created an unpleasant sensation in the mind of the newly created midshipman, who was not aware of its tendency or actual meaning. “ I do not understand you,” replied he.

“ Why, the fact is, one of our messmates—

just about your size, died three weeks ago, and his chest and clothes have not been sold ; so Mr. Wetsail is going to speak to the captain, and no doubt you will have them, if you like it, almost at your own price."

" But I have no money," responded Hamilton, " nor am I likely to get any for some time to come."

" That's a matter of no consequence," said another ; " immediate payment is not requisite, and I'm sure you'll readily find bondsmen."

In less than an hour from that time, Hamilton found himself in command of the schooner, with an excellent stock of clothing, cocked hat, dirk, quadrant, and all the necessary outfit as a midshipman. Old Johnson and nineteen men composed the crew, *viz.* fourteen seamen, and five marines, and the small cutter of the sloop-of-war was hoisted on her deck. His instructions were, to run to the eastward of Jaquemel, and so along-shore, and pick up whatever chance might throw in his way ; then to proceed off Cape Tiburoon, and cruize there for a week. It would be impossible to describe the proud feelings of the youth, when he felt himself thus confided in ; nor was

the pleasure of old Johnson of any trifling degree, for, with the true characteristic of the tar, he had selected Hamilton for his pet, and was highly gratified at the distinction that was shewn him, though secretly he was aware that the real trust was reposed in himself. But there was also another who looked upon the youth arrayed in his midshipman's uniform with uncontrolled delight, and that was Quaco, who, though much hurt, yet had concealed the real extent of his injuries that he might accompany his young master; and now he sat on the aftmost gun, watching every movement of Hamilton, and exclaiming, "Garamercy, 'em do him proud for true!"

In a few hours the sloop and her prizes were no longer to be seen from the schooner, as with a fresh wind off shore she stretched to the eastward for the appointed station, purposing to commence the cruize from the island of Beta, off the Cape of the same name. Le Serpent sailed remarkably well, and the men conducted themselves very differently to what they did before, when they could plead the force of example in the officer as an excuse for their own delinquency. On the following evening they made the island, and stood in

between it and the cape, from which they took a fresh departure and bore up to the westward again, without having seen anything of the missing vessel; nor did they meet with any adventure worth recording till they arrived abreast of a small port a little to the westward of Cape Tiburoon, where they were becalmed nearly within reach of shot from the shore, and clearly discerned a ship at anchor close in, and a flotilla of row-boats pulling out towards them. In vain old Johnson whistled for a breeze; in vain did Quaco invoke all the saints he could think of, black, white and piebald—the wind continued heedless of their entreaties, and though a cat's-paw now and then just troubled the surface of the waters, it only served to tantalize them the more.

“Come what may, we are all ready for them,” said Hamilton, whose few days of responsibility had taught him many a useful lesson. “It will be sharp work I dare say, but I do not think they will attack us till dark, they will present too conspicuous an object by daylight, and offer too bold a mark.”

“If they mean that, Muster Brineoh, I have no fear on 'em,” replied Johnson, stopping in the middle of a gentle lady-like whistle, as if to court

the breeze with its silvery tones. "It 'ull be odd if we don't get a light air off the land, and then we'll show 'em a little sport for their trouble. Howsomever, we must get out our sweeps, and go with the current, which is setting strong to the westward, and if them fellows do come, we can lay the nine-pounder pretty well to give 'em a taste on it."

"Dat bery good, Massa Johnson," said the negro; "but let go him killick do better—'cooner hold on—boat drift away—breeze come bum by—up anchor—board him prize dere," pointing to the ship with his chin—"cut cable—run away—boat down to looard—no?"

"Well, it's wonderful and concantackerous to me, Quaco, how you gets yer knowledge o' things, seeing as yer nothing but a dark-skinned nigger, as never had any thing like larning," said Johnson. "Yet, Muster Briqneoh, he's right; and I'm blessed if I don't back his natral inkstink agin all the book study in the world. Let 'em pull out a little further, sir, and then we'll drop the anchor with a spring on the cable; and if they chooses to get within range, we'll physick 'em with a pill or two as 'ull 'die-o-rear their indisgestions,' as the corporal says."

The suggestions were complied with — the schooner was anchored—and the row-boats, as Quaco had predicted, were swept away by the current, in their endeavours to return towards the shore ; for they did not care to venture within range of the nine-pounder. Hamilton paced the deck of his vessel with all the pride of youth entrusted with command ; but he was nevertheless extremely anxious as it respected the purposed attack upon the ship, though he placed the utmost reliance on the judgment of old Johnson, and the natural sagacity of the negro.

At the turn of the tide a breeze sprang up from the south-west ; the schooner was got under weigh ; and, as evening had now set in, they could no longer discern the position of the ship, nor the situation of the row-boats ; but the Indiaman's bearings had been well taken, and as soon as the anchor was secured they stood towards the spot.

It would be impossible for the pen or the tongue to describe the excited state of feeling in the breast of a man-of-war's man when in pursuit of an enemy ; and one remarkable trait in their character is the astonishing coolness and steadiness with which, notwithstanding this excitement, they perform their

several duties. Indeed, to this may be attributed a great portion of the success which has attended our naval battles, whether in the hostile collision of fleets and squadrons, or the engagements between single ships. Nor was this all; for, in the hour of imminent peril from the rough and boisterous elements in their rage, or the apprehension of wreck on the more obdurate rocks—when the diversity of threatened destruction was more than sufficient to appal the sense and paralyze the body of the landsman—the tar has stood collected and firm, eyeing death as an enemy with whom he had to grapple, hand to hand, for mastery.

It may be reasonably supposed that the brave fellows in the schooner, though enervated by the insalubrious climate, wanted none of the *esprit de corps*. They were, in fact, thorough man-of-war's men, in every sense of the term; ready for every enterprise, without calculating results, and more easily governed by example than guided by precepts. They were now perfectly sober, for their only stock was the regular ship's allowance, and no one could have been found amongst them who meanly, dishonestly, or dastardly would have robbed a shipmate of his daily grog.

Every eye was earnestly directed away on the schooner's lee bow, and the inquiry was often repeated to the man on the fore-yard, "Do you see any thing of her?" and the reply as frequently returned in the negative. But they had neared the place where she had been riding, so as to render it impossible not to catch sight of her had she remained; but the fact was, the moment the shades of darkness began to fall heavily upon the waters her cable had been cut and she was run on shore. Quaco was the first to discover this, and running closer in than sound discretion would have dictated, they perceived the ship by the light of her canvas, lifting to the swell as it rolled in, and all doubt of her situation was instantly at an end.

"She is worth a trial yet," said Johnson to the young and newly-made midshipman. "The schooner must stand off with four hands in her, and away out to sea."

"And what then, Johnson?" inquired Hamilton, as he eagerly listened for the advice of the old man, who with a stooping gait, and one hand arched over his eyes, was earnestly scanning the ship's position.

“ Why, sir,” returned the seaman, “ the other sixteen men must man the cutter, and when the schooner heaves in stays to stand off, the boat must be dropped, and lay upon her oars till the craft has got a good offing. That ’ull make the crapohs think we have had enough of it, and in course they’ll not never excumsabberate any suspicion as we’re nigh hand ’em. Well, then, we’ll pull quietly in shore, and be superinducticated by circumstances. What do you say to that, ould pipe-clay ?”

Quaco had paid great attention to what the veteran had urged, but being better acquainted with the locality of the place, he at first differed with him, and used arguments which convinced Hamilton the negro was right ; but suddenly, the latter appeared to change his mind, and without assigning even a plausible motive, he strenuously recommended an attack.

The manœuvre was put in practice—the schooner, after firing a shot or two at the ship, which was not returned from the shore, stood out to sea, leaving the cutter well manned and armed behind her. The negro had been desired to remain in the craft, but, with a pertinacity which surprised Hamilton, who knew that the black was not over partial to

fighting, he insisted upon accompanying his young master in the boat.

It was nearly midnight—the schooner was scarcely visible in the distance, and indeed only seen at intervals when she rose on the summit of the swell, and appeared like a sea-bird wetting its wings on the comb of a wave. The cutter, with muffled oars, noiselessly swept in shore, and as they approached, they became more and more sensible that their *ruse* was unsuspected. All the night long lights had been flashing to and fro, and they could hear the sound of many voices, engaged in work of labour, which Johnson correctly attributed to the plunderers, who would not lose a moment of time in landing whatever part of the cargo they could conveniently get at.

Cautiously did the cutter advance till they were nigh enough to ascertain that the ship laid nearly on her broadside, with her masts (on which the top-sails remained set) pointing to the shore; whilst boats were busily engaged in removing every thing that could be grabbed hold of, and parties of negroes and white people by torchlight were rolling up casks upon the beach, and placing them in detached heaps.

“ We’re ondiskivered as yet,” whispered Johnson to Hamilton, as the cutter laid about a cable’s length a-head of the ship ; “ but as for getting off that ere craft there, to my thinking its onpossible, for, by the way she hugs the ground, I’d bet my grog again a marine’s button, that she’s more nor one hole in her bottom, and is half full of water. But then, Muster Brineoh, it ud be exasperating to me to leave her in the hands of them picarooning wagabones, seeing as she’s good English timber and British built ! For my part, I wouldn’t leave ’em enough to make a toothpick of, if I had my will.”

“ Well, Johnson, you have only to advise me for the best,” returned the young midshipman, “ and my ready acquiescence shall be given.”

“ There’s never a soul among us as doubts your hackyessence, Muster Brineoh,” responded the old man, eagerly catching at a new word, though he did not comprehend its meaning ; “ but,” continued he, after a momentary pause, “ it isn’t altogether hackyessence as we wants, and to my thinking the smell of powder is as sweet and as wholesome as any other essence whatsomever.—No, no, young genelman, it’s good cumbusterbles as is necessary just now—in fact, without any more circumferential

backing and filling, we must set her on fire, and that's what we must do. Quaco, keep the boat's head for her off-side, just under the bow. We'll board 'em, and get possession, and then every man his brand.—Now, be ready, shipmates; follow your officer with steadiness—give every lubberly crapoh his gruel, and don't leave one to sup his broth again."

The cutter moved stealthily along, like the spirit of destruction gliding with spectral stillness over the surface of the waters, for the oars were only used to steady her steerage, as she drifted with the current to the precise spot old Johnson had pointed out, and which they reached wholly unperceived by the busy multitudes who thronged the shore, or the few stout negroes under the directions of two or three whites, who were assisting as well as they could, on the inclined plane of the deck, in breaking out the cargo.

"We're all right, Muster Brienoh," whispered Johnson, "but mayhap as you arn't had much experience in the way of going aloft hand over hand, you'll be sommut bambaxter'd to mount-a-reeve-o up the side,"—the boat rubbed against the ship; "keep her off, ye lubbers, do," grumbled

the old man, “d’ye want to let ’em know what we are arter. Well, Muster Brineoh,” continued he, “I’ll shin up and send you down the eend of a rope, which you must pass round you under your arms, and we’ll rouse you up, never fear. They’re making too much noise, and are too busy to hear us.—Drop the boat under the main chains there, Jem Baxter;” the order was obeyed; “and now, Jem, rise your body, like a sky-rocket, up by the boat-hook, and send us down a few fathoms of rope.”

The command was complied with—the man who had been addressed fixed his boat-hook into the laniard of one of the main shrouds, and climbed into the channel, from which he sent down the end of the required rope—the veteran Johnson was soon by his side, and together they hauled up Hamilton, who was speedily followed by the rest, leaving only one man to take charge of the cutter.

CHAPTER IV.

“ Boarders—away !”

THE ship was lying, as before described, right along the strand, and parallel to it ; and though she occasionally lifted when a heavy swell set in, yet Johnson felt assured that his surmise of her being bilged was correct, and there could be no hope of getting her off. She laid upon her starboard side, so as to bring her gangway nearly level with the water ; and, consequently, it was impossible for any person to obtain foot-standing on her decks, unless by the companion, the skylight, or the combings of the hatchways ; so that there was not a single individual on the upper side, except Hamilton and his party in the main-chains. A considerable multitude was assembled on the beach, as well as in the boats that were conveying the plunder away ; and all were clearly discernible to the man-of-war's men, by the strong light sent forth

from the torches, whose ruddy glare tinged the foam of the surf with a blood-like hue, and streaming on the surrounding objects, served to heighten the interest of the imposing spectacle. Behind them rose, in dark-frowning grandeur rendered more visible by the illuminated fore-ground, huge blocks of broken granite, that looked as if they had been piled in such strange and uncouth masses by an Almighty hand, to shew that no human strength or power could thus have placed them. In the rear of these towered the lofty mountains that mark this line of coast, lifting their craggy summits into the heavens, to catch the first and the last gleam of day.

Most of the figures that moved to and fro were negroes; and the torch-light, flashing on their black skins, afforded a picture which a warm imagination might easily have applied to the place of endless torment. Nor was the confusion that prevailed at all calculated to diminish the delusion; for there was, apparently, no one to direct or control, and each seemed to be following the bent of his own inclination, in securing whatever he could for himself. Neither was much scrupulous attention paid to individual claims, for the strong robbed the weak of

his share, and added it to his own ; and, during the few minutes that Hamilton looked on, several sanguinary contests took place, in which, from the inanimate state of the conquered party, it was fully believed that lives were recklessly sacrificed without exciting the slightest interference from the rest.

“ We must open our fire quite permiscuously, Muster Brineoh,” whispered Johnson, “ and let fly right slap among the thick of ’em. They don’t seem to be overstocked with arms ; and, Quaco tells me, they arn’t never got no battery here.”

“ If I am right in my views,” returned Hamilton, “ we are to set the ship on fire. Now, would it not be best, Johnson, for half-a-dozen hands to do this, whilst the rest keep the fellows in check ?”

“ All right, Muster Brineoh,” responded the veteran ; “ and I’ll just take five of the men with me, whilst you pepper the thieves with the muskets. But, first of all, have a slap at the boats alongside, and astonish their indelectuals a bit.”

“ Make ready !” exclaimed Hamilton, in an audible whisper ; “ take a steady aim at the people in the boats, and do not throw a charge away. Fire !”

Thirteen muskets were discharged, and twelve men fell, to the great astonishment and alarm of

the survivors, who at first stood panic-struck; but, some of the more quick-witted conjecturing the cause, it was instantly vociferated through the whole, and “*les Anglais—les Anglais!*” reverberated amongst the rocks. Another volley produced nearly similar deadly results, and in a few minutes the ship was abandoned to the captors. But the people on shore were not destitute of fire-arms, as a scattering and random discharge soon evinced, though it did no injury, and Johnson with his shipmates cleverly effected an entrance to the cabin by the sky-light.

The boats had rapidly pulled for the shore, and the men had joined their confederates, as they extinguished their torches and sought shelter among the rocks, so that nothing remained visible to present a mark to fire at, and Hamilton and his party were compelled to remain inactive. But this did not last long, for the measured sweep of many oars in more boats than one, was heard approaching along the shore, and the young midshipman readily conjectured that the sounds proceeded from the row-boats that had been carried away by the stream, and were now exerting their utmost strength, no doubt stimulated to action by the reports of the

firelocks. In this emergency, he earnestly requested Quaco, as the person in whom he could place the greatest reliance, to inform old Johnson of the circumstance. The negro at first manifested an unwillingness to go, but finding Hamilton was determined to perform the duty himself if he refused, he reluctantly complied.

Anxiously did the young midshipman wait for the old man's re-appearance. The noise of the oars was minutely growing louder; the negroes on the beach were re-lighting their torches, and having become aware of the advance of their friends, shout after shout resounded amongst the crags, multiplied by the numerous echoes into a myriad of voices. Still Johnson came not, and Hamilton, after waiting a few minutes longer, went himself in search of him. On reaching the cabin sky-light he lowered himself by a rope, and found the old man very busily engaged in igniting a quantity of combustibles he had collected together in the state-room, which had once belonged to the captain, and one of the men with distended cheeks was blowing it into flame.

"Young genelman," exclaimed the veteran, "what, desarted your post whilst your men are in danger?"

“Have you seen Quaco?” eagerly inquired the midshipman; — “where is he? I thought you would have heeded the message I sent.”

“You best can tell where the nigger is, Muster Brineoh—blow harder, you lubber,” returned Johnson, alternately speaking to Hamilton and the seaman, who acted as a supernumerary pair of bellows; “I left Quaco under your orders in the main-chains—puff away;—and as for messages—there it comes, bright and clear—why as for messages—stronger yet, and the flame rises—I arn’t seen no living homogiferous cretur since I boarded the craft, save and excepting fat Jem here, who’s puffing away like a grampus—a fresh hand at the bellows, Jem.”

“What can have become of the negro, then,” exclaimed Hamilton, in apprehensive alarm; “I sent him some time ago to tell you that the row-boats were coming up along-shore, and were close to us.”

“The row-boats,” reiterated Johnson; “another puff, Jem—then it’s time to be moving, Muster Brineoh. And there it is, all on fire; it ’ull puzzle ’em, Jem, to distinguish that again, so you may leave off now, and if you can find a toothful o’ rum, bear

a hand and stow it away in your hould, it 'ull give you fresh wind, messmate, and I'm blessed if we shan't want breath afore we gets back to the schooner."

"But the negro!" exclaimed Hamilton; "where can Quaco have got to? I saw him go towards the companion."

"Mayhap he has pigged in with some of the others down forud," answered Johnson; "I shouldn't like to lose the nigger, for his nat'ral inkstink might help us in a pinch, letting alone his being a shipmate and what not. Howsomever, I'll call the men together;" he put a whistle to his lips, blew it shrilly two or three times, and then went on—"we shall soon see what's become of him, though a piece o' darkness like that arn't to be very clearly diskivered on such a night as this."

In a very short time the other four men made their appearance, and, at first inspection, either of them might have been mistaken for the negro, so begrimed were all their features with soot, tar, and gunpowder. On inquiry, however, neither of them had seen Quaco; and Hamilton, though greatly distressed, yet cherished a hope that he might have returned to the party in the chains. A loud shout-

ing and a discharge of musketry quickened the motions of the fire brigade, who hastily ascended to the deck, except old Johnson, and Hamilton saw him, with a sort of match in his hand, set fire to a quantity of loose cotton that was thickly spread between the cabin table and the aftmost lockers. They were not long in mustering in the channels, but no one could or would render any account of Quaco, and Hamilton expressed his determination to proceed in quest of him.

“Avast, avast, Muster Brineoh,” exclaimed Johnson, in an admonitory tone; “in less than five minutes from this time there will be an explosion abaft, and the lads have set her on fire in half a dozen different places. You ought not to disremember, sir, that you are now an officer in his Majesty’s sarvice, God bless him, and that every one demands the same care from you, let em be black, white, or grey. These hère men, sir, won’t start tack or sheet without you, and ——”

“You are right, Johnson,” returned the youth mournfully; “my regard for the negro was blinding me to my duty. To the boat, my lads—to the boat.”

Whilst this brief conversation was going on, the

men remained perfectly silent, watching the approaching boats, which were becoming distinctly visible ; but they were between the ship and the shore, except one of the largest that was evidently pulling round her. The command to man the cutter was instantly obeyed, and every one resumed his oar as they shoved off from alongside. But this resumption was only momentary, for the voice of old Johnson was heard.

“Small-arm-men, make ready !” The seamen handled their muskets, and, just as the row-boat came full into view in an oblique direction under the ship’s counter, the order was given to fire, and such was the fatal effect of the aim, that nearly every shot told upon the enemy, who dropped from the oars, most of them dead or wounded, and the rest through fear. But the boat had good way upon her, and was almost instantly alongside the cutter.

“Board her, Muster Brineoh,” shouted old Johnson, waving his cutlass ; but, conceding the post of honour as leader to his young officer, who sprang into the row-boat, and was followed by the veteran and several of the men. Not the smallest resistance was offered, but there were cries for mercy, which never met a British ear in vain.

“She’s our’s, young genelman,” uttered the veteran tar, “and we must carry her off with us. Take her in tow there in the cutter, whilst we toss up the masts.”

The wind had continued to freshen from its first getting up, and was now blowing a top-gallant breeze; the row-boat’s sails were lateen, and to step the short stump of masts was the work of not more than a couple of minutes; but before that time had elapsed the whole flotilla were seen rounding the ship’s stern, though evidently with much caution. At this instant a loud explosion blew the vessel’s quarter completely out; the fragments were dashed with impetuosity amongst the row-boats, rending and crashing, and slaying; and several of the cutter’s hands received contusions and bruises, though, happily, without any fatal consequences.

For several minutes dismay seemed to pervade both parties, but the English recovering first, the sails of the prize were promptly set; the cutter as quickly followed the example, and hoisted her three lugs, and they were walking off at a spanking rate, when the Frenchmen, recovering from their panic, sent a volley after them which killed two—one of the prisoners and a marine,—and

slightly wounded four others, amongst whom was Hamilton. This was immediately returned—with what effect it was impossible to judge, but the enemy offered no further molestation, and about five minutes afterwards they had the satisfaction of seeing the flames burst out, right fore and aft, with such impetuosity as to convince them that it was beyond all human power to arrest their progress.

“And now, Muster Brineoh,” said old Johnson, as he turned his quid with much self-complacency, hitched up his trowsers, and looked with satisfaction at the burning pile, “I think we’ve made no very bad night’s work on it, barring the loss of the nigger, who I’m half inclined to believe had a bit of a soul in him, notwithstanding they denies them consarns to the blacks in this here West Ingies. Howsomever, here we goes, and if them chaps in the schooner haven’t got omnobulated, with their heads under their wings, they’ll make out the burning craft, and stand in shore. But there’s one thing, Muster Brineoh, I am’n’t overhauled to you yet.”

“And what is that, Johnson?” inquired Hamilton; “I hope it is something of a consolatory nature, for, I assure you, my heart is very heavy at the loss of my old friend. I know neither father nor

mother ; Madame Bri not is, perhaps, separated from me for ever, and the negro was the only tie I had remaining ;” he paused a minute, “ yet I wrong you, my kind friend ; you have, indeed, shown me the most disinterested friendship, and it is solely to you that I am indebted for my present circumstances.”

“ Why ay, Muster Brineoh,” responded the veteran ; “ I don’t mean to say that you are none the worse for having a friend at court, as the donkey-man said to his ass ; nor am I going to enter any thing again your name in regard o’ your liking for the nigger ; but alays bear in mind, young genelman, that an officer must hardly be allowed to pay out the slack of feeling for hisself when on duty ; for then his king, his country, and the people he has in charge, ought to disgross the whole tier of his ideas, whether they’re coiled away in Flemish fakes, or ownly in cable fashion. But that arn’t altogether what I’m going to tell you, though I’ve roused out pretty handsomely in the way of lingo to give a sort of prefish to the rest. That ’ere craft in flames arn’t by no manner o’ means the ship as we’ve been looking arter, but, according to my notion o’ things, she’s a Spaniard

as has fallen into the hands of pirates—ah, there the fellows are poking their fire-sticks at us again.”

A harmless volley this time was sent after the retreating party; and the row-boats, finding they had no chance to catch them, or, what is more probable, cherishing no desire to come in personal contact with their enemies, gave over pursuit; and in about an hour's time they had got alongside the schooner, that had tacked in-shore to pick them up. The first care was to remove the wounded; the next employment was to bury the dead; and the late foes, side by side, were consigned to the deep.

“What shall we do with these poor creatures, Johnson?” inquired Hamilton; who, though almost fainting with the pain from two wounds caused by musket balls, one of which had passed through his thigh, and the other grazed the upper part of his head, yet had concealed both. “They will perish here. Is there no means of sending them ashore?”

“Why, Muster Brineoh, I'm thinking that among such a set of owtrageous devil-may-care sort o' chaps as they calls friends, they'd be more likely to die like dogs ashore than they would like men aboard; but our own poor fellows requires the

doctor, and so if you pleases we'll make sail for Jamaica and look for the ship."

This was instantly acceded to, for independently of his humanity towards the sufferers, he felt it would be necessary to get his own hurts dressed; but whilst giving the necessary orders to fulfil his desire, a sudden sickness at heart came over him; he staggered a few paces, and fell heavily upon the deck.

"Well, then, I'm blowed if this here arn't too bad of me," exclaimed old Johnson, as he assisted to raise the prostrate youth; "here have I been working this young genelman as if his timbers and his scantling were as sound as an ould tar's as has weathered the breeze for forty years. Lift him up as gingerly as you would an infant, Jem, and let us take shame to oursels for heaving the poor lad on his beam-ends, after such a no-man's-land sort of fashion. Muster Brineoh," shouted he, but the youth made no response, for he had fainted—"Muster Brineoh," repeated the veteran still louder; "now Heaven forbid that he's got beyond hail. Muster Brineoh!—Yo hoy!—it's o' no use, Jem.—Why where's that lubber of a jolly?—Here, you corporal; confound your jawing-gear; bear a

hand this way, and if ever you know'd anything of the mother medicker in your pill-building consarns, jist attend to the young genelman here."

The corporal responded to the call, and placing his hand over the heart, pronounced that it was nothing more than "syncope."

"What cope?" asked Johnson; "never mind though, as long as he arn't slipped his wind. But halloo, what's this?—blood!—well, I'm blessed if it arn't, and the gallant young fellow must be wounded."

Johnson, on lifting the inanimate midshipman, had placed his hand under the lacerated thigh, and thereby stained it with the blood, which, though it had not flowed very copiously, had nevertheless saturated the blue trowsers which he wore. The day was just breaking, but as in that climate the dawn is but of short duration, there was sufficient light to display the crimson hue on the hard horny fingers of the veteran. Hamilton was carried below, and whilst the corporal carefully examined his body, old Johnson manifested the utmost solicitude and delicacy, as he stood over the youth, and assisted in binding up the wounds.

Hamilton's insensibility did not endure very

long, and on his revival he found every sail was packed upon the vessel, the row-boat with her lateens being left to make the best of her course alone ; but fortunately she held good way with the schooner, and was not left very far astern. Three of the wounded Frenchmen died in the course of the day, and just about dusk they fell in with the *Glassewisky*, who, after seeing the prizes safe into port, had come out in search of them. The wounded were immediately removed to the sloop of war, but as Hamilton earnestly desired to remain in the schooner, the surgeon did all that was necessary and left him. The following day they arrived at Jamaica ; and shortly afterwards the schooner was bought into the service.

It was with feelings of considerable pleasure and pride that the young midshipman heard the congratulations of his veteran commander ; nothing but the earnest solicitude of old Johnson could exceed the considerate kindness of Captain Tyrrell, who embraced every opportunity of introducing Hamilton to his friends (and he had many), both ashore and afloat, and the youth would have felt perfectly happy could he have seen his benefactress rescued from the fangs of the French commis-

sioners, and have ascertained the fate of his old associate, Quaco. But nothing is perfect in the world, and this truth was fully felt by the young midshipman, though hope swelled high in his breast that both desires would, before long, be accomplished.

It was at this very juncture that Captain Tyrrell, wholly unexpected by himself, was made acting post in a two-and-thirty gun frigate, and Hamilton was induced to follow him, especially as one hundred pounds had been presented to him by the inhabitants of Kingston for his gallantry, and he was enabled to discharge his pecuniary obligations, and add to his slender stock of clothes. Nor was the veteran Johnson left behind, for his chief and he had been so many years together that separation was impossible, and he was allowed to accompany his old commander. The frigate had not been long from England, and having been under the command of a thorough martinet (removed into a forty-four) the young midshipman found a very different set of officers to those of the old ship, whilst the men, acquainted beforehand with Tyrrell's character, had no sooner heard his commission read, than they greeted him with three hearty and honest cheers.

Such was the posture of affairs when the reverses

in the West-India Islands rendered it necessary to send confidential despatches to England, and Captain Tyrrell was selected for the purpose. No time was allowed for consideration; the ship was victualled and watered without a moment's delay, and in the course of a few hours was under weigh, and on her passage for home. Nothing material occurred beyond a gale of wind, during the voyage, and in six weeks from the day of their departure they moored ship in Plymouth Sound. Captain Tyrrell started for the metropolis with his despatches, and intelligence was received on board that he had met with a very gracious reception from the First Lord of the Admiralty. His elevation to post rank, and his appointment to the frigate, were confirmed.

Under the instruction of his veteran friend, old Johnson, young Hamilton had diligently applied himself to the study of seamanship, and as nothing gratifies the pride of an old tar more than witnessing the progress of a youngster in the art they are so evidently attached to, he was never at a loss for a practical teacher; whilst Mr. Wetsail, who had been invalided from the sloop of war, and had taken a passage to England with his ancient shipmate

and commander, imparted to the youth a correct knowledge of navigation, so that he bade fair to become an active, enterprising, and intelligent officer.

Whilst refitting, Hamilton was very attentive to his duties, and the first lieutenant lost no opportunity of assisting him in his nautical education ; and whilst others, who had many relatives and friends, were enjoying the delights of the shore, he remained steadily by the ship. But a period of relaxation arrived, and then Mr. Simpson took him to visit and inspect the wonders of Plymouth ; the fortifications and the dock-yard excited his admiration and astonishment, and he felt a glow of pleasure warm his heart as a conviction came across his mind that he too was an Englishman, though it was soon saddened down by the reflection that he was alone in the world, without parents, without kindred, without home, and almost destitute of friends.

The season was summer, and nature appeared beautiful in her verdure ; the Sovereign and the Court were at Weymouth, and thither was the frigate ordered to attend upon the royal yacht, as part of a protecting squadron, when his Majesty embarked on a cruise. Hamilton was delighted at

the prospect of seeing the powerful monarch, of whom he had heard so much, as possessing the ardent attachment of his people ; whilst others calculated upon some event occurring that would bring them under the kingly eye, and insure their promotion.

On his arrival in Portland Roads, Captain Tyrrell, in full uniform, hastened in his barge to wait upon his Majesty, and Hamilton accompanied him in charge of the boat, of which old Johnson was coxswain. As soon as he had landed at the jetty, for the tide was out, the veteran chief took his way to the royal residence, leaving the young midshipman with orders to await his return, and not to suffer the men to wander away.

The afternoon was rather sultry, with but little wind, and the beach was nearly deserted on account of some fête that was going on in the town. An hour had elapsed, and the intense heat caused the barge-men to be thirsty ; at least they said so, and permission was requested for two of them to run to the nearest public-house, to bring down drink for the rest ; but Hamilton, rigidly adhering to his orders, positively refused, and no small degree of grumbling was the consequence.

“What am I to do, Johnson?” enquired the youth, a short distance apart from the rest, of his humble friend—“you know how strict the captain’s orders were, and yet I cannot endure the thought that the poor fellows should suffer.”

“Dooty afore all nations, Muster Brineoh—and though I wants a toothful as much as any on ’em, and would top my boom to get it if I could, yet, says I, death afore dishonor; and as you’ve axed me my opinion o’ things in general, and this here in particular, why all I’ve got to say is, there ar’nt one of ’em as ought to side out for a bend, even if Billy Pitt was to tell ’em.”

“What, what, what—what’s that about Billy Pitt?” exclaimed a tall elderly gentleman, who had advanced upon them unperceived; “Who’s Billy Pitt eh,—who’s Billy Pitt?”

“Why, yer honor,” returned old Johnson, hitching up his trowsers, and giving the enquirer a look of mingling respect and reproach, “you seems to be the full-length of a genelman at all events, from your figure-head to your starn, but I never liked listeners, from a notion I got when I was a lad, that the devil always was badgering athwart my bows, to catch howld of every word as was launched

out of my bridle port ; and as for Billy Pitt, mayhap you long-shore gentry may sabby the thing better nor I, that Billy Pitt is ould Georgy's chief mate, as works a traverse to get to wind'ard of his skipper, and though he don't wear the crown, I'm blessed but he rigs out the sceptre like a guess-warp boom, for any one to hang on by ; and there, yer honor, that's Billy Pitt."

"All riddlemeree ! riddlemeree !" responded the gentleman, as he lifted a gold-headed cane and laid it, with the utmost gentleness, on the old tar's shoulder ; while Hamilton, who had drank in every word of the stranger's speech, experienced a thrilling sensation, for which he could by no means account.

"But come, come, Mr. Midshipman," continued the gentleman, addressing the youth ; "what, what was you saying about Billy Pitt—eh, what was you saying about Billy Pitt ?"

"Well, yer honour, I hopes no disparagement, for I means none," intruded old Johnson, for Hamilton was unable to reply ; "but the case stands just as this here : you can't expect the know-all-ness and experience of sixty-two upon the shoulders of fifteen or sixteen, and therefore mayhap the

young genelman don't never sabby nothing whatsoever about Billy Pitt, and the more so in regard of his having passed most of his life in the West Ingies. Howsomever, I ar'nt never ashamed of anything I says, and so in course I'll jist overhaul the calkilations of the thing. The skipper has come ashore to wait upon his Majesty, God bless him ! and the day being hot, the people got dry and wanted to go upto the public, and fetch down someut stronger nor water ; but the captain's orders was as not a soul was to leave the barge, and I was just telling the young officer not to allow them by no manner o' means, even if Billy Pitt was to come and fetch 'em."

"But the king—suppose the king was to come, what would you do then?" uttered the old gentleman archly, "you would not refuse the king?"

"It arn't for me in my capacity as coxsun to answer for my officer." returned Johnson rather unwilling to take upon himself more responsibility than he ought to do, or else desirous of drawing Hamilton out. "But if I had charge, why I knows too much of owld Georgy to log down again him that ever he would constrapulate a poor tar to neglect his dooty to his commander."

“Con-what? con-strap—constrap, eh, what, what?” inquired the gentleman, while Hamilton endeavoured by every means in his power to connect his early recollections with the voice and manner of the stranger.

“Constrapulate, yer honor,” repeated Johnson; “which means bamboozle, or cumfuzzle a fellow, so as to bring him under the articles of war, and perhaps get him seized up at the gangway.”

“But Billy Pitt is a friend of mine,” exclaimed the gentleman, seriously—“mustn’t hear him spoke ill of—no, no—mustn’t speak ill of Billy Pitt.”

“Well, yer honor, I arn’t got the pleasure of knowing yer honor—but I am not the lad, as I said afore, to keep my thoughts in a fog-bank, or in boobibus, as Muster Herrick would have said, and so I’ll just pay out a bit of my mind—Billy Pitt* arn’t never no better than he should be.”

* It is a curious circumstance that I have never yet heard accounted for, although the fact is undeniable, the old men-of-war’s men, both before and after the mutiny, attributed all their troubles to the celebrated William Pitt, and his name was scarcely ever used without an execration. The negroes entertained a very different opinion of the “heaven-born minister,” and both on the coast of Africa and in the West Indies, Billy Pitt was a name very freely assumed, and very

“Monstrous charge!—heavy offence!” exclaimed the stranger laughingly; “and so, young gentleman, you wouldn’t let them drink—right, right, very right that—bad habit, drinking.”

“To excess, I presume you mean, sir,” said Hamilton. “I have no objections to my men quenching their thirst this warm day, but I cannot consent to their quitting the boat.”

“Under all circumstances, mayhap yer honor wouldn’t mind just making a board to the public, and telling ’em to send down a bucket o’ stuff,” requested Johnson.

“Stuff!—stuff!—what stuff?” returned the person addressed; “can’t tell what you mean by stuff.”

“Lord love yer heart—why yer honor must be a little nummy not to diskiver the meaning of ‘stuff,’” answered Johnson with a mingled look of ridicule and contempt; “why stuff means grog, ale, beer, and what not, for a thirsty sowl to drink.”

“What, mix ’em all up together?” inquired the stranger; “bad stuff that—bring on headache—

proudly acknowledged. At most of the negro settlements or tribes, such as those at Madagascar, the Comoro Islands, &c. the adviser of the king was called Billy Put, and the same thing occurred in the South Sea Islands.

get in the sick list—and I suppose you have come here to attend upon the King.”

“And that’s what we have, yer honor,” responded Johnson proudly. “I ownly wish his Majesty—God bless him! was here now; he wouldn’t let his tars moisten their lips with sun-beams as ud cook a beef steak—no, no, its owld Georgy as would order us somut to wet our whistles, and take the sheepshanks out of our windpipes!”

The gentleman fidgetted about for a minute or two evidently pleased with the bluntness of the veteran, and then beckoning to a person who was standing at a distance, he gave him some directions that could not be distinguished by the seamen. The man walked hastily away, and when he had got a little way off, the stranger called after him, though not loud enough for the other to hear, “Remember, nothing but small beer—only small beer.”

“Swipes!” burst forth from half-a-dozen voices, to the great amusement of the gentleman, who laughed heartily at the disappointment of the men.

But at this moment two ladies approached—one passed the middle age, but still retaining traces of great beauty; the other apparently about seventeen, and as lovely as Hebe when she presented nectar

to the Gods. The bargemen had not removed their hats to the gentleman; but at the presence of the ladies, not a head was covered, and the most profound and respectful devotion was evinced.

“Ha—my lady, how do you do?—what, what, stole away, my pretty one,” said the gentleman, addressing first one lady and then the other. “Glorious afternoon this—very fine—should like to have a row in the boat—very pleasant on the water—very—should you like to go, eh?”

“It would afford me great pleasure, Sire,” returned the eldest lady; “but this spot recalls painful remembrances to poor Ellen.” The younger female looked down, and the tears stole from her eyes.

“Oh ay,—yes I recollect,” exclaimed the stranger; “a water excursion would do her good—cool breeze yonder—I wish we had a boat—don’t grieve, my pretty one—poor Hammy—strange name though, comical name—well, my lady, there’s no boat.”

“You must be joking, Sire,” returned the elder female; “here is a noble boat lying idle on the beach, and a gallant crew ready to obey your orders.”

“They won’t, though—no, no, they won’t,” responded the strange gentleman, looking archly at the young midshipman, and the coxswain; “they wouldn’t give even the King an airing contrary to commands. Ah now, if Hammy had lived—poor Hammy!—he might have been just such another, ay, just such another as yon youth—he wouldn’t have refused me.”

“Nor will he now, Sir, if it should risk his life,” exclaimed Hamilton, springing forward and catching hold of the stranger’s fingers between his own trembling hands. “Oh, it has burst upon me like a flash of lightning—I see it all, and you Sir, you are ‘the gentleman,’—he who in my infancy was kind and indulgent to me and dear little Ellen, and played with us and young Ned at nurse’s. Yes, yes, it is all fresh before me; and though years of quiet and days of trial have passed since then, still the glimmering has been treasured even in a far-off land. I am that Hammy of whom you speak. I cannot, must not be deceived—it would kill me—oh say that I am the child whom you once cherished, and who was carried away to sea—do not slay me outright,” and the youth burst into tears.

This appeal was uttered with much vehemence, and the supplicatory tone and manner affected every one who heard it, but in different ways. The seamen looked like great schoolboys, when reading a pathetic tale—the gentleman eyed the youngster with distrust, as if fearful of deception—the elder of the ladies was calm and placid, though the soft distillation of real sympathy was visible on her cheeks—the younger lady gazed with a fixed earnestness on the youth, and scarcely drew her breath—at length she hurriedly exclaimed, “The mark Hammy, the mark my brother had.”

“A wine-mark on his breast—it is here, Ellen, it is here!” Hamilton tore open his shirt and displayed it, and the next instant they were locked in each other’s arms.

CHAPTER V.

“ Well met again, old friend.”

THUS acknowledged by the operations of triumphant nature, Hamilton's heart was nearly bursting with delight, whilst several of the jolly tars, especially old Johnson, fairly blubbered right out. Still the strange gentleman looked suspicious and unconvinced, and the elder lady (who was none other than the Countess of Gordon) seemed in some measure to share in the feelings of her male friend, though she could not but participate in the joy that sparkled on Ellen's countenance. Yet the youth's face had not a single line that bespoke deception ; all was open candour and exquisite gratification.

“ What—what ?” said the stranger ; “ this must be seen to—never—no, never practise imposition, young man ; we must inquire into this—eh my lady, —eh ?”

“ Oh ! indeed, Sire, he is no impostor,” uttered Ellen, deprecatingly ; “ I am sure he is my bro-

ther—my own brother—the still, small voice of my departed mother tells me so:—indeed, indeed, my lady, it is that Hammy I have wept for so often.”

“Do not distress yourself so much, my love,” said the Countess, soothingly; “I trust he is your long-lost brother.” The gentleman shook his head; and Lady Gordon observing it, added, “I think, either one way or the other, it may be easily proved, your Majesty.”

The words “your Majesty” were like an electric shock to the poor tars, who, though they had heard the title “Sire,” knew not that it was only addressed to a sovereign. Every man stood proudly erect; and Johnson, having hitched up his trowsers, cast a side-long glance at “owld Georgy’s” face, whilst Hamilton, as if awakened to fresh remembrances, though dimly shadowed forth, bent himself upon one knee before his King.

The affair was partly ludicrous, partly solemn; but the former eminently prevailed, when the attendant, who had been despatched for the “swipes,” was seen returning, accompanied by two servants, each bearing a highly polished pail, well filled with port wine negus. The monarch graciously raised the youth, and then looking archly, first at the sea-

men and next at the beverage, and then at the seamen again, addressed the veteran Johnson :—

“ Come, come, coxswain — come, must drink ‘owld Georgy’s’ health—and better manners to Billy Pitt, eh?—ay, better manners to Billy Pitt;” and the monarch laughed.

“ God bless your Majesty,” returned the aged coxswain, smoothing down the remnant of his grey hair. “ If I spoke my mind too freely, why, I’m sorry for it ; but arter all, I tould yer Majesty the truth. It is not always when a poor fellow is veering away upon his palaver, that he knows when to clap a stopper on and bring up. But, yer Majesty, I meant no offence; and as I’ve often fought for my King and country, so I would willingly die in your sarvice : and as for the grog —— ”

“ The King wouldn’t constrapulate you, eh?—no, no, sailor, the King never constrapulates,” and again the good-tempered monarch chuckled with unrepressed glee.

Hamilton had withdrawn to a short distance with the ladies ; and Ellen, proud of her newly-found brother, hung fondly on his arm, as they mutually recalled to memory the scenes of their childhood, so as to convince the Countess of the relationship that

existed between them. But the King wished the happy party to witness the gratification of the seamen, as they drank their Sovereign's health in bumpers.

Whilst thus engaged, Captain Tyrrell returned, and was surprised, amused, and pleased, to see his Majesty taking such an interest in his barge's crew. The King drew him apart, and questioned him relative to the young midshipman :—the generous officer related the history of his *protégé*, with which he was well acquainted, and spoke of him in terms of high encomium, so as to entirely remove the prejudices which a fear of imposition had created, and to raise an assurance that Hamilton was indeed the child of that dying mother, to whom he had administered the last consolations of religion. Leave of absence was obtained for the young officer—the barge was ordered on board, and shoved off as soon as the “stuff” was finished ; but not till old Johnson had given the midshipman a look and a smile of approbation and pleasure, and the men, one and all, delivered themselves of three hearty cheers.

Mrs. Jones, the mother of poor Ned, had paid the debt due to nature, and therefore was spared the

pain which would have been renewed at the mysterious disappearance of her son. As for Hamilton and Ellen, they were truly happy; and when his Majesty departed with the Countess and Captain Tyrrell, they walked together to the house which they had inhabited when children, and the youth was reminded of many spots and incidents, as they were pointed out by his sister.

All doubt of the young midshipman's identity was removed, and he was once more received under Royal patronage; which, though it procured him greater distinction amongst his superiors, and more consideration from his messmates, seldom rendered him presumptuous with either. From the Countess, who was warmly attached to Ellen, he received the utmost kindness, and many days of happiness did the brother and sister pass together whilst the court remained at Weymouth; the only drawback to their pleasure being a want of knowledge as to their parentage and origin.

Hamilton—so far as his recollection would serve—narrated his adventures since their separation, and many anxious thoughts, and not a few tears, were devoted to the memory of his kind benefactress, Madame Brienot; nor was the negro Quaco forgot-

ten. Having the *entrée* to the royal visitors and the friendship of the Countess, the youth's romantic tale revived the still-remembered occurrence of the orphan children amongst the nobility ; and now that they were grown into riper years, every one readily distinguished and petted, the royal *protégées*. As for Captain Tyrrell, warm-hearted and generous, he rejoiced in the good fortune of his young officer ; and though advanced in age, yet still a great admirer of rank and beauty, proud was the veteran's heart to receive the noble Countess and her suite, whenever the squadron put to sea ; for though Hamilton had been offered a rating in the yacht, he preferred remaining with his old commander in more active service ; and, at Ellen's intercession, her friend and patroness generally embarked in the frigate during the royal cruises, and by her munificence and condescension, became almost idolized by the gallant crew.

At length the season was over—the King returned to the metropolis—Hamilton and Ellen parted from each other with great regret ; but each had now a stronger tie to bind them to existence, and ardent as their warm-hearted affections were, it hardly need be said that they promised themselves much

happiness in the future. The frigate was ordered round to Plymouth, and became a channel cruiser on the coast of France, where she was very lucky in captures, so that Captain Tyrrell declared "that fortune was at last redeeming her former scurvy tricks, though it was only to gild his coffin-nails"

Whilst cruising off Brest, orders were received by a despatch vessel for the frigate to be engaged upon a special duty, but the intent and purport was not communicated to the officers. At night the ship was anchored near the Parquet rock, and the pinnace was sent to lie at a grapnel close in-shore, at Camaret Point, ready to take off an individual who should give a certain pass-word, but without fail to be on board again before daylight.

The night passed away in rigid watchfulness—the pinnace returned without fulfilling her mission; she had lain close to the beach undetected, but no one had made his appearance; the anchor was weighed, and whilst the frigate was enveloped in the darkness which surrounded her, she was clothed with canvas, and stood out from her perilous situation. On the following night she was again brought up in nearly the same spot—the boat resumed its station, and once more returned with

similar results ; the ship was promptly under weigh as before, and running from the land. The practice was continued a third and fourth night, without anything material occurring ; but on the fifth, about seven bells in the first watch, the noise of oars falling on the water was heard. At first it was conjectured to be the pinnace returning, having accomplished the desired object ; but as the sound approached, it became evident to the well-practised ears of the seamen that it was not the pinnace, but some diminutive boat, at no great distance. Every eye was instantly on the alert, and in a few minutes a small punt was visible, coming towards them on the larboard bow ; a challenge was given from the frigate, and remained unanswered, when Captain Tyrrell shouted, “ For England, ho ! ” Breathless silence prevailed, and the next moment a voice was heard responding “ Saint George and merry England ! ”

“ A rope for the boat,” exclaimed the captain, as he quitted the larboard gangway. “ That is my man—hoist a light for the pinnace.”

The boat, a small punt, came alongside ; it was rowed by two men, whilst a third squatted down in the stern sheets, holding a pistol in each hand, and

a huge Newfoundland dog crouched beneath the thwarts under the rowers.

“What ship is this?” inquired the man abaft.

“His Majesty’s frigate the Dolphin,” answered the captain. “I have been waiting for you these five nights—come aboard.”

“Directly, Sir,” assented the man. “But you must relieve these poor fellows first—they have had a hard pull, sorely against their wills. Come Nep, old boy; sit steady, sir. ’Pon deck there? Lend me a hand, up with the dog.”

The man’s requests were complied with—the huge animal was carefully raised up the side; two seamen were sent into the boat—the wearied rowers ascended to the deck, followed by the person who had spoken; the dog fondled upon him, and then laid himself quietly down near the binnacle.

“I fear you must have had a hazardous time of it, Mr. Morris,” said the captain. “The pinnace is now waiting for you at the appointed rendezvous, but I began to give up all hopes of seeing you.”

“Mine is at all times a perilous life, sir,” answered the man, “and latterly it has been more so than ever. I have been in Brest a whole week, and made several attempts to get to Camaret Point by

land; but found that I was so closely watched, the thing was impracticable. To-night I hired these two men, to take me in their cockle-shell to the Arethuse, lying in the roads; they readily complied, and when afloat, these persuaders"—he held up his pistols,—“induced them to bring me out. Your position here is well known ashore; a *chasse-marée* brought in the intelligence, and I easily guessed the cause of your lying where you do. I have had much trouble with the two Frenchmen in passing the batteries; but, if you please, they must be refreshed and sent back without delay. Trust them for keeping still tongues in their heads, that would not be long upon their shoulders if they revealed a syllable of this night's work after they get on shore.”

The steward was directed to supply the wants of the two men, and Mr. Morris went below with the captain, where they were soon engaged in earnest conversation. The Frenchmen were briefly examined, and sent away; the pinnace returned soon afterwards, and orders were issued for getting under weigh as smart as possible.

“No time is to be lost, Mr. Norton,” said the captain, addressing the first lieutenant. “Morris

tells me that a squadron is coming out, purposely to attack us; and as we cannot stand a ship of the line and three or four frigates, the sooner we top our boom the better."

The pinnacle was hoisted in—the men danced round at the capstan till the cable was a short stay peak, when the command was given to loose sails. Morris and the captain were conversing together near the gangway, when, during the lull, whilst the topmen were aloft, the dog hastily approached his master, and sniffing the wind, gave a short sharp growl. "Ha—is it so Nep?—see to 'em, lad—try them again." Once more the animal elevated his nose with quick sudden jerks, and then uttered a sound between a bark and howl. "He never deceived me yet, Captain Tyrrell—cut—cut, sir, at once"—he raised his voice to a roar. "Bear a hand, and let fall the sails aloft—clap on the topsel sheets and halyards with a will, my lads;" then, bowing to the surprised captain, he added in gentler accents, "Forgive my usurpation of command, sir, but the enemy is approaching — and by —! yonder he comes—this is no time for compliments."

Captain Tyrrell looked in the direction pointed

out, and could discern several sail creeping out from under the land—the commands of Morris were peremptorily repeated—the ready axe cut deep into the straining cable, the strands were nearly severed—another blow, and the anchor-part smoked out at the hawse-hole—the frigate was free and paying off, and in two minutes from that time she was covered with canvas aloft and aloft, and gathering way like a race-horse. The French squadron fired a few straggling shots, and then, fearful of encountering the British fleet, slunk quietly back into port.

The sagacity of the noble dog was soon reported through the ship, and Hamilton, who from infancy had been attached to such animals, patted him on the head, and received the creature's rough caresses in return. He was very old, and age had made him peevish, but with Hamilton he was always pleasant. Morris retired to rest on the captain's couch, and the dog was permitted to repose near him; but when about mid-channel the wind shifted round to the N.N.W., and blew a fresh gale with a lee tide, so that Captain Tyrrell determined that, instead of struggling to reach Plymouth, he would keep her a good free, and stand

for Portsmouth: the breeze in four hours afterwards favoured his design, and the frigate rattled along at a ten-knot pace, till the anchor was let go at Spithead. Morris landed at the Sallyport, and Tyrrell, desirous of pleasing the Countess, gave Hamilton permission to accompany the messenger to London; but this arrangement was defeated by the admiral, who sent Morris off in a chaise and four by himself, and the young midshipman, eagerly desirous of seeing his sister, started by the coach; but on reaching Portman Square, he ascertained that the Countess, accompanied by Ellen, had set off the day before for Castle Toole in Ireland, having received intelligence of the expected dissolution of her aged parents.

This was the first time the young midshipman had visited London, and it hardly need be said that he was highly surprised and pleased at the magnificence which the West End presented. From the servants he received every attention and respect; refreshments were promptly provided—a room was prepared for him; but he had now no inducement to remain in the metropolis, and he therefore determined to return to Portsmouth as soon as possible. After writing to his sister, he

accepted the offer of the under-butler to show him the parks, the royal palaces, the Admiralty, Whitehall, and other places.

Whilst returning from a sight of the venerable Abbey of Westminster, and repassing the Admiralty, Hamilton felt his hand touched by some extremely cold substance, and turning sharply round, he beheld the Newfoundland dog of the messenger, who fondled upon him and then joined his master as he stood leaning against the stone wall at the entrance, apparently so absorbed in thought as to be insensible to every thing that was passing before him. He was a fine, tall, muscular man, with handsome features, though anxiety had worn deep furrows in his countenance, and an early autumn of life was bringing on a premature winter of age.

Hamilton was about to accost him, but unwilling to disturb his reverie, he stood still for a moment or two to contemplate his person. The dog, too, tried to engage his master's attention in favour of the youth, but without effect ; and it was not till a rough, brawny-looking seaman suddenly seized him by the arm, that he became conscious of his situation.

“What cheer—what cheer?” exclaimed the highly gratified tar. “It’s many a long day since we’ve been alongside o’ each other, Captain Feaghan.”

“Hush, hush, old man,” returned the messenger, grasping the hand of the tar, which he cordially shook; “you must not hail me by that name here—but how do you weather it, Tom?—you look in good sailing trim, old boy.”

“Why as for the matter o’ that, it’s been like the outside and lining of an oyster’s jacket wi’ me—rough and smooth, sir,” responded the seaman. “I’ve made a few trips across the pond, but somehow I never had much luck in that way since we lost the Blue Bob—poor thing.”

“Don’t refer to it, Tom—it revives recollections which I would wish to subdue,” said the messenger mournfully; but catching sight of Hamilton, his manner instantly changed as he uttered, “You have not forgotten me, then, young gentleman? I am glad to see you, and hope you have found your friends well.”

“Thank you for your good wishes,” returned Hamilton; “but, unfortunately for me, my friends are gone over to Ireland.” The man started, and an expression of deep interest mingled with pain passed across his features. “They left London

yesterday, but I understand they were in good health when they departed."

"If the question will not be deemed impertinent, pray to what part of Ireland are they gone?" inquired the messenger.

"To Castle Toole, near Bantry," returned the midshipman; "a rather wild and lawless part of the country, I am told."

The seaman and the messenger glanced fixedly at each other; and the latter rather vehemently exclaimed, in a strong Irish accent, "and who has made it wild and lawless? them as are battenning on the blood, the marrow, and the sinews of my countrymen. Are you related to the O'Tooles, young gentleman?—oh! their's is an honoured and a holy name."

Before Hamilton could reply, however, the seaman who had been addressed as Tom (and was in fact none other than our old acquaintance, the boatswain of the smuggling cutter, old Tom Graves) eagerly vociferated, "and that just freshens the nip of my memory, captain; I've found her, and she's now in England."

"Ha!" uttered the messenger, as he drew a convulsive respiration, "how did you discover her—eh, Tom?—does any one else know a word of the matter?"

“Lord love your heart, yes, and I was coming to the Admiralty purpose to ax about it,” replied Graves.

“About what, Tom—about what?” asked the captain, greatly agitated. “Tell me, sir,” he continued sternly—“tell me in what way you found out where and who she was.”

“Why, you know, Captain Feaghan, I never was much of a hand at making head-way when over-pressed by canvas—I was somut like the cutter in that—poor thing!” remonstrated old Tom; “but if you’ll listen a minute or two, why I’ll just overhaul the circumstance of my diskivering o’ Madam Brienot.”

“Madame who?” eagerly inquired Feaghan, as he again folded his arms and leaned against the wall; “I thought you meant some one else. Who is this Madame—what’s her name you are speaking of?”

“Well, then, I’m blessed if that don’t clinch it,” exclaimed the old man. “Why, didn’t we leave the young ’un with Madame Brienot at Bordeaux?” Hamilton’s ears tingled,—“and that reminds me that the craft you went out in was wrecked, and all hands perished. Yet, captain, you are here.”

“Yes, yes, Tom; a trusty friend, that never

deserted me in peril," and he patted his dog's head, who seemed perfectly sensible that the allusion was to him, "saved me. But what of Madame Brienot?"

"Why, she's in London here, all alive as a conger, and the lad's alive too aboard o' some man-o'-war, and I've hauled my wind upon this here tack, just to try and make him out," answered Graves.

The coincidence of names and places, if it was nothing else, acted powerfully on the youth's mind, and seizing the hand of old Tom, he hastily demanded "Is Madame Brienot from the West Indies?"

"Why, ay, young gentleman," answered Graves; "she's not long landed from a Yankee as brought her from San Domingo, where the blacks are all turning Christians, and cutting one another's throats."

"And the child's name—quick, if you would spare me agony! What was the child's name that you left with her?"

Feaghan gave the youth a keen look of scrutiny, for his former mention of Castle Toole awakened suspicion; but old Tom replied in his straightforward manner, "Why, to the best of my recollection, his name was Hammy."

"My God I thank thee!" fervently uttered

the youth; "thou hast indeed wrought wonders for me!" Then addressing the seaman, he continued, "That child was stolen from the beach at Weymouth, was it not so?"

"Can't disactly say," answered Graves, looking inquiringly at Maurice Feaghan; "mayhap it might, and mayhap it mightn't."

"It was, it was;—it must be so!" vehemently uttered the youth, as he threw his arm round the dog's neck—who licked his face, and seemed pleased with the caress. "This is the noble animal that has been often shadowed in my remembrance as my early playmate—this is that Neptune who swam with me in the water. Old man, I am that Hammy who was left at Bordeaux."

Tom held the youth at arm's length, as he earnestly gazed on his features, whilst an hysterical laugh burst from Feaghan, and a number of people were gathering round them; but a well-timed repression of feeling by the Captain saved them from annoyance, and together they adjourned to a coffee-house, where mutual explanations ensued.

It appeared that Tom Graves had quitted the contraband dealing (except on particular occasions, such as landing a freight from an Indiaman, or some

such thing,) and become a hoveller. It was whilst engaged in this pursuit, that he boarded an American ship—the Ebenezer, off Dungeness, to carry her abreast of Hay, or Shakspeare's Cliff, near which they expected to pick up a Dover pilot. Almost the first person who caught the old man's attention was Madame Brienot, and though several years had elapsed since their last interview, an almost immediate recognition took place, and Tom was induced by the entreaties of the lady to accompany her, when she landed at Deal, in her journey to London.

“ I must not delay seeing my benefactress,” said Hamilton. “ You must stand my pilot, old man. Come, let us get under weigh at once. You will accompany me Captain Feaghan?”

“ There was a time, young man, when it would have been my pride to be your companion,” answered Feaghan; “ but the favoured of a monarch—the son of a baronet—nay, who possibly is a baronet himself, is far too elevated to become the associate of poor Morris the spy—for such is my character and occupation, young gentleman.”

“ What do you mean by the son of a baronet, or a baronet himself?” demanded Hamilton, greatly agitated. “ Alas! I know not who I am; and it is unmanly and cruel, thus to mock me.”

“ Let it rest for the present,” returned Feaghan. “ You are most assuredly what I have stated you to be ; but a powerful and malignant enemy intervenes, one whose wealth would outweigh even that of a parsimonious king. I know who you are, and have evidence of the fact : but we must go discreetly to work. We must take a run over to Ireland, though perhaps, if recognized there, my life would not be worth more than a few hours’ purchase. Still it must be done ; in fact, it was my intention to visit that distracted country before making another trip—the Countess being there, will aid us in our designs. Go now, young gentleman, and see the French lady, and I will wait upon her in the evening. I know the inn well, but she must shift to some better berth.”

The outlawed smuggler, now transformed into an avowed spy, quitted the place, and Hamilton (having dismissed the under butler some time before) accompanied Graves to the place where Madame Brienot was sojourning : but scarcely had he entered the inn-yard, when he heard a voice exclaiming, “ You—for Jacksonapes rarksal, who no hab better manner for me lady—eh ?”

“ Come, come, Mister Mungo, clap a curb upon

that ere jaw of your'n, or I shall be obligated to try a snaffle," responded another. "And as for your lady, as you call her, she may be an outlandish lady, but she's not never English, to refuse a guard a trifle as has brought her all the way from Dover. I say, Muster hoveller, can't you just pitch it into her what's the reglars?"

"You arn't been over civil, my friend," returned Graves, "and as you may see she's furren, and the black arn't no better than an on-christian-like nigger, why the matter of paying out a little good manners 'ud ounly be showing 'em that we knows how to behave ourselves, this here side o' the water."

"Here—here!" exclaimed Hamilton, giving the man some silver, whilst the negro sprang forward, and grasping the midshipman by the arm, danced round him in antic glee, to the great diversion of the spectators, singing,

"Me lose my sooe,
In an old canoe,
Johnny oh—come wind 'em so,
And now me find me Massa oh."

"Golly, me so glad for see you again, and Missy for me tan tiff, for hab too much joy;" and Quaco, for it was he, skipped before him into the presence of Madame Brienot.

CHAPTER VI.

“The time approaches
That will with due decision make us know
What we shall say we have, and what we owe.”

MACBETH.

THE interview between Hamilton and his benefactress was of an exceedingly affecting character, and proved the strength of human attachment, even where there can be no maternal feeling to influence the affections of the heart. The lady wept and laughed alternately, as she caressed the youth, and rejoiced unfeignedly at once more seeing him; whilst the black rendered more familiar by the events which had occurred, capered about the room, singing snatches of songs and performing all sorts of gambols, to testify his gratification. As soon as something like decorum was restored, the youth eagerly requested an explanation of their arrival in England—which may be given in a few words.

It appeared that when the old sloop was released, the master of her made the best of his way to Port

au Prince, where he faithfully fulfilled the promises he had given of communicating with Madame Brienot, and using his best efforts to effect her escape from the destruction which threatened her. He found the lady under partial confinement, pestered on the one hand by the mulattoes, who claimed her as one of their own race ; and tormented on the other hand by the French commissioners, who were jealous of her movements, and suspected that she was secretly acting in concert with their enemies. They knew her to be a royalist, and that, without any other cause, was of itself sufficient to ensure condemnation, whenever an opportunity offered.

It was about this period that Hamilton, from the schooner, made the attack upon the ship, in which, it will be remembered, the negro was missing after the action ; the fact was, that Quaco, in his eager haste to avoid the straggling fire which was kept up at intervals, and which happened to be pretty fierce just then, had laid hold of a slack rope to ease himself down, when away he went overboard ; but striking his head against the lower bulwark, he remained for some time in a state bordering upon stupefaction, though he still retained sufficient consciousness to

comprehend the situation he was in, and prudence enough to cling to the rigging so as to keep his head above water. As soon as he was able, he endeavoured to rejoin his companions, but his efforts were ineffectual, and on hearing the row-boats as they pulled up in shore, he divested himself of his apparel and remained holding by the ship's mizen channel, which he had contrived to reach. When the affray was over, Quaco was a negro amongst the rest, and no one recognised him; for as the marauding party had been drawn together from various places along the coast, the persons composing it were not very well acquainted with each other, and thus he passed undetected for an associate.

By dint of perseverance and subtlety, Quaco got to Port au Prince at the very period appointed for the secret embarkation of his mistress in the old sloop; his ready invention and subtle craftiness proved extremely serviceable on the occasion; eventually they escaped, and favoured by the breeze in a few days they were safe at Porto Rico and under the protection of the American flag, for Madame Brienot would not trust herself ashore but took her passage with Captain Wise, in the Ebenezer,

to New York, whence she had embraced the earliest opportunity of getting to England, rightly judging that her attachment to the royal cause might endanger her life if she attempted to return to France.

Such was briefly the history of that affair; and Hamilton having related his adventures, Madame Brienot, though pleased that the young midshipman was under such exalted patronage, yet could not resist a feeling of jealousy that he should be indebted to any one but herself or have any other protector. In the evening Feaghan made his appearance and after a serious consultation it was decided upon that Hamilton (whose period of liberty was undefined) should write to Captain Tyrrell acquainting him with the necessity for his going to Ireland and earnestly requesting the veteran's indulgence for a few days. The young midshipman suggested the propriety of informing his royal benefactor of the posture his affairs had assumed, but Feaghan had motives for declining this, though on the following day he conducted Hamilton into the presence of the home-secretary of state, to whom he communicated every particular, and was in return furnished with documents which he was to

use or not, according as he saw it necessary or essential to do so. Hamilton did not hear the whole of their conversation, nor was he present when the documents were given, having been desired to wait in an ante-room, where he was joined by Feaghan, and they quitted the office to prepare for their departure.

In the meanwhile, Madame Brienot had removed into furnished apartments that were more suited to her rank and fortune, for she was still extremely wealthy; and in the dusk of the evening a chaise and pair drove up in which was Maurice Feaghan, and Hamilton, who, being well supplied with cash, and after bidding his benefactress farewell, entered it, and the vehicle instantly drove off. To Hamilton's surprise, however, he found another inmate besides Feaghan—a lad apparently younger than himself; but the deepening shades of twilight would not allow of an inspection of his features, though there was a melodious sweetness in the tones of his voice that greatly delighted the young midshipman. Feaghan had contented himself with merely introducing the youths to each other, and though there was a natural shyness at first in the manners of the strange lad, yet it gradually wore off and their conversation

became more free from restraint. Feaghan said but little, and was soon apparently in a deep sleep.

They travelled all night, stopping only at the appointed inns for changing horses; but the carriage was commodious, and they slumbered tolerably well. The day broke with splendour on the travellers, and Hamilton, who was the first to awaken to its beauties, had an opportunity of examining the countenance of his younger fellow traveller. His skin was swarthy and freckled, but the features were very regular and handsome; his eyes were closed, and a large furry cap was pulled closely down over his forehead, though a quantity of rank yellow hair was seen issuing from beneath it. A feeling of mortification which he could not account for came over Hamilton's heart; there was nothing repulsive in the lad's face; but still he wished his fellow traveller had been better-looking. But his musical voice when he awoke, and his full large blue eyes, softened down the disappointment, and they talked familiarly together on different topics, though the young midshipman would rather have conversed with Feaghan on his future prospects, but the outlaw was silent on the subject, and whenever it was broached, an intimation that a third person

was present, entirely stopped all further allusion ; indeed, Feaghan seemed enveloped in his own thoughts and though kind and affectionate to the youngsters, and especially so to the boy (whom he named Thady), yet he was by no means communicative.

We shall not follow the travellers through their journey, in which no time was lost, but proceed with them at once to the dwelling of the kind-hearted old priest father O'Fogherty, who received them with a thousand welcomes. Nor was Annie, now a staid matron, less warm in her reception, though the tears started to her eyes, her voice faltered, and her hand trembled, as she extended it to Maurice Feaghan, and they steadily gazed, each on the other's countenance. Oh, woman ! love is a pure and holy thing, enshrined within an innocent and faithful heart ! The days of brilliant prospects and happy contemplations had passed away ; the future was enveloped in a shade of gloom ; yet still the affections were unsubdued, and though sobered down, were in their nature as strong and as powerful as ever. Annie would have died for Feaghan without uttering one murmur or complaint. It is in this that woman is superior to man ; it is in this that

true devotion lies, and accursed be the wretch who would triumph over it.

It was over the little turf-raised grave of Ned Jones, that Feaghan revealed to Hamilton every particular that he knew connected with him, and the youth shed many tears upon the grass ~~that~~ covered the remains of his infantine playmate; it was here also that Feaghan narrated his own eventful history, (which it is possible I may one day publish); and Hamilton's grief was renewed whilst listening to the misfortunes of his parents.

The power of the Catholic priests over their flocks in Ireland is too well known to require particular notice here; but it is nothing in the present day to that which they exercised in former times, when a link of communication was kept up in one continuous chain amongst the priests, so as to render them an invincible body, in their connected sovereignty. To establish the claims which Hamilton would have to make, Father O'Fogharty issued a mandate for certain parties to meet in the neighbourhood of Bantry. The holy well (the scene of the action between the troops and the rebels, as described in the first volume,) was fixed upon as the rendezvous.

Feaghan with his two youthful companions repaired to Castle Toole, where, notwithstanding the circumstances of her aged parents, who were gradually sliding into the tomb, the Countess received them with pleasure, and heard their story with astonishment and gratification. Ellen was delighted to see her brother; but her delight gave way to wonder, when he communicated to her the history of her birth and expectations. Feaghan's interview with the Countess was long and painful, and at its close, Thady was consigned to her ladyship's care, and trusty messengers were despatched in different directions, to collect evidence in the immediate neighbourhood.

Hamilton and the outlaw were the first at the holy spring—it was much such another evening as that on which the rencontre took place, and they were wandering amongst the broken crags of that romantic spot, which had once been the theatre of bloodshed, when a tall man advanced from a narrow fissure, and placing himself full in front of Feaghan, exclaimed, “Arrah thin, Captin, its yerself intirely shure—faix an I'd know you all the world over, and fardther beyand—”

“I have deceived myself,” returned Feaghan

musingly ; “ I thought years, and toil, and sorrow, had so changed me that I should not be known. Yet, why such a delusion should have seized me is a mystery, since I have recognized every one of my old acquaintances. But how is it, Larry, that you are here ? I was informed that you were dead.”

“ Dead ?—och ! then its meself has been dead and kilt intirely in that bastely place—and I’m not Larry Laffan now, but somebody else,” returned our old acquaintance.

“ Dead or alive, Larry, I am glad to see you, without asking any more questions,” uttered Feaghan. “ I suppose you are here by the praste’s orders ?”

“ What then, you take me for a ghost of meself, raised up by the praste ?” murmured Larry, in a tone of inquiry ; “ Och then, divel a bit, though its bothered I am to spake to you, seeing as I’m another man.”

“ You have come to right the injured, Larry—to prove by evidence, that Sir Cornelius O’Connor, the hunchback, is a villain. Is it not so Larry ?” asked the outlaw, emphatically.

“ Och, then, and you’ve just hit it, Captin,” assented Laffan, slapping his hand upon his thigh,

so as to make the echoes resound again. "But, honour bright, Captin, is it friend or foe you are?"

"A friend to the rightful heir of O'Connor Hall," answered Feaghan firmly. "When was the Smasher the enemy of the oppressed? The satisfaction has been long withheld, but now, Larry, we will place him in his own, as unshaken as one of our native mountains."

"Well, but this bates all natur, Captin," returned Larry, joyfully snapping his fingers, and flourishing his stick, as he cut an Irish caper, "Och, this does bate anyhow, an himself, an his counsellor to the fore."

"You are aware, then, who it is you are to meet?" uttered Feaghan. "And though you call me his counsellor"—

"Arrah what?" shouted Larry. "Captin Feaghan a counsellor? Faix, an you'd look the clane thing, in one o' yer maley-peraty wigs, and black gowns. Oh wirras-thrue, is it yerself as 'ud prache at the bar?"

"You are humorous, Larry," responded Feaghan, rather nettled at the other's jocularities at such a moment; "but I see age has not dimmed your

mirth, though it has thinned your blood. You spoke of me as the counsellor to—”

“ Och—hear to that now,” laughed Laffan, “ well I’m bothered, but it’s a good joke if we could ounly find it out. By the powers, Captin Feaghan, but it wasn’t yerself I’d be afther in-shulding wid the name of lawyer. It was Counsellor Lillybull shure, as sticks in between the rocks there, like an anchovy atwixt two slices o’ bread and butther—success and long life to that same.”

“ Counsellor Lillybull !” repeated Feaghan, with surprise ; “ concealed too : There may be enemies at hand ;” and he felt in his pocket for his pistols, as he exclaimed, “ Come forth, sir ; there can be no necessity for hiding if you are a friend, and if an enemy, I have something here will soon search you out.”

A portly man emerged from a cleft that seemed not half big enough to contain him, except, like a bottle of India-rubber, he would bear compressing without decreasing his dimensions. “ Beg pardon, sir,” said he, courteously bowing in rather a pompous manner ; “ I trust—sir—that—sir, from what I have overheard, we shall not act in hostility to each other, sir—I am perfectly satisfied

it is so, sir, for I'm never mistaken in these matters."

A burst of merriment from Feaghan made every rock and nook send back its echo, whilst Larry, the counsellor, and Hamilton, stood mute with astonishment. As soon as it had passed away he held out his hand to the man of law, exclaiming, "My old friend Captain Lilyburn, by all that is legal—why Larry; why Captain; how is this?"

"Och then, meself dunna," replied Larry, whilst Lilyburn, declining to accept the extended hand, uttered,

"I never forget my friends, sir, and I cannot at this moment call to mind that you are one of the number. I know a gentleman when I see him, sir,—nobody can deceive me in that—and I did hope from your appearance that"—

"Avast, avast, Captain; do not let us cross each other upon opposite tacks; we have often done that before now, and hot iron has passed between us," urged Feaghan. "What you are now, I have no right to inquire, any more than what you are doing here, except so far as my own safety may be concerned. You may be looking out for smugglers, or perhaps searching for that newly-discovered moss the lilyburnalia."

“Ey?—ha!—what’s that?” exclaimed the surprised Lilyburn. “My sight is not so good as it used to be; yet,” he looked earnestly at the outlaw, “yet it is—it must be Mr. Tooley, or rather Mr. Tooley Figgins. Well, I declare I thought I knew you from the very first—no, no, I’m not easily mistaken in such things. I am your debtor for a life preserved sir, and—”

“But may I, without being deemed impertinent, inquire your business in this lone spot?” asked Feaghan, persuasively; “I expected to meet some friends here.”

“And I trust you have met with friends, Mr. Tooley,” returned Lilyburn. “It strikes me—yes, I am not so readily deceived—I say it strikes me we are here upon the same errand. I think, Mr. Figgins, I heard you say you were come to right the injured—am I right?”

“You are perfectly right, Captain Lilyburn,” answered Feaghan; “and though at the present moment we cannot ascertain our exact relative positions, yet I declare such to be my purpose. May I ask to what parties you allude?”

“It is a delicate question, Mr. Tooley, and would require deliberation before I gave an answer

to any other person," responded Lilyburn, "but with you I am safe, and my client—"

"Your what?" demanded the outlaw, in a tone of mingled astonishment and mirth.

"My client, Mr. Tooley," responded the other, with perfect coolness of manner. "Stop, stop, I see how it is, and a little explanation will set all to rights. In early life I was educated for the bar: but a truant disposition, and a father's interest in the Customs, drew me away from Coke and Littleton, to buffet with the waves. My losing my prisoners, as you well know, and subsequently the wreck of my cutter, deprived me of command, and I once more resumed my legal studies, and am now one of his Majesty's counsel, learned in the law. This, sir, I owe to my never being mistaken, and I have, thank God, a pretty good practice. Thus, Mr. Tooley, you see I have no longer any claim to the title of captain, though my nautical experience is of infinite service to me in causes connected with maritime affairs."

"And, after all," said Feaghan musingly, "the change is not so very great; a lobster's a lobster, whether on dry ground or in the water; and from a sea-shark to a land shark, is no such wonderful

metamorphose. But you said something about a client, Mr. Lilyburn, surely you do not mean my old friend Larry here?"

"Och! now ye're coming the blarney over me, Captin Feaghan," said Larry, scratching his head and looking very silly: "is it meself as looks like that same?"

"Humble as the man may be in life, Mr. Tooley, yet the law recognizes him as a subject of the realm, and has him under its protection," argued the counsellor; "Liberty—liberty, Mr. Tooley, is the grand basis on which British jurisprudence is founded. Oh, Sir, I know something of the law, and believe me, the freedom of the subject I have ever held to be paramount to all other considerations—and the freedom of the subject is recognised; nay, more, it is guaranteed by the laws of England."

"Which have never yet reached Ireland then," responded Feaghan, interrupting him; "for in this country the freedom of the subject is locked up in Dublin jail, where the only liberty it has, is the liberty of looking between iron bars."

"Oh! then, Captin, its yerself as bangs any how, barring the counsellor here; and may be he don't know a thing or two," exclaimed Larry, significantly.

“It would seem that we are not to come to an explanation,” continued Feaghan, with assumed carelessness of manner, “and therefore Captain or Counsellor Lilyburn, which ever you may be, and I must own I might be easily deceived either way in the matter, we must each shape his own course: so fare thee well, friend.” And taking Hamilton by the arm, he gave indications of departure.

“Och! hubaboo! an what do you mane, Captin Feaghan,” demanded Larry, placing himself in front of the outlaw, so as to impede his progress; “would you sell the pass upon us, and yer ould frind to the fore? Och! then, isn’t he, the—the—the thing-um—he—the counsellor’s clienter I mane.” Feaghan put him gently on one side, and was walking away. “Blood and turf come forenent him Mister Murtoch and plade yer own cause—why? Its bang the counsellor you would, and him a borned lawyer as they made say-sick? Arrah then out wid yerself, Mister Murtoch Delany as is somebody else now, and was, and is, and shall be, the rightful heir if every man got his own avich!”

“Silence—silence, my good man,” exclaimed the little lawyer, endeavouring to stop the vociferations of the Irishman; “have more reverence for the

instruments and agents of the law, and do not meddle with things beyond your comprehension."

"Oh ! to the divel I pitch you, Mister Saltwather Counsellor," shouted Larry, as he stretched forth his sinewy arms, apparently to suit the action to the word ; but Lilyburn avoided his touch ; and again the old man bellowed, "Arrah Murtoch—Mister Murtoch as was clane kilt and smashed in a furren world, och hone—come out I say, and stand afore 'em like a man."

Thus urged, the person on whom Larry had called answered to the summons, and, issuing from the place of his concealment, approached Feaghan with outstretched hand, and said, "I am indeed the Murtoch Delany with whom you were intimate in your earlier days. What I really am remains to be proved ; and of one thing I am certain, that none can render me greater assistance than my old friend Maurice Feaghan. I fear we have both suffered severely from the rubs of the world, which, however much they may wear away the frame, have still the quality of brightening friendship."

"Och ! aisy then, Mister say-lawyer, and jist listen to the two," uttered Larry, preventing some obser-

vation which Lilyburn was about to make ; “ its them as ’ull lay down more laws in an hour than all the counsellors in Cork and Dublin could pick up in a month.”

“ Are you indeed,” said Feaghan, “ the reputed son of my old friend Dermot ? the undoubted eldest born and heir to Sir Terence O’Connor. Keep back boy, and rest aisy,” for Hamilton was pressing forward, and Feaghan, as he warmed with the interest of the scene, resorted to his Irish accent, “ keep back, I say ! Well—well, whether it is the finger of Providence or the hand of the divel—whether its end is for good or for evil, the work is wonderful, and here it is.”

“ I am indeed that same,” affirmed Murtoch with vehemence, “ and you know me well, Maurice, by rank and title, and myself, Sir Terence Hamilton O’Connor.”

“ Hooroosh ! I knew it,” shouted Larry, as if the recognition by Feaghan was all that was required to substantiate the claim ; “ where’s de shticks and the boys to use ’em—och ! achree, but the heart of me’s full, Sir Terence, and plase God I’d a lad to stand forenent me jist for love ;” and Larry flourished his persuader :—“ och ! then joy to yer sowl Mister

Lillybull, will ye take a bout wid me, and you wanting yer wig?"

Lilyburn very prudently declined the invitation, and a warning from Feaghan subdued the ecstasies of Larry. "Whisht—whisht owld man," said the outlaw, "be aisy, and whisht—there's watchful eyes to the fore;" the sound of voices at no great distance, produced a dead silence, which was broken by Feaghan, who uttered, "they are the witnesses gathered from far to prove the title of the O'Connor heir. But it was not for you, Murtoch, that they were summoned;—I see nature will prevail—it cannot be restrained. Young gentleman, I need not tell you, for you already know it—you stand in the presence of your father—Murtoch, your son;" and Feaghan turned away to stifle his emotion.

In an instant parent and child were locked in each other's embrace, and language is inadequate to describe the affecting scene that followed. The injured, persecuted man, who had suffered imprisonment, banishment, and degradation; who believed himself childless, and bereft of every comfort, had within a few minutes been recognized as the heir to immense wealth; and at the same time pressed to his heart the boy of his much-loved wife—the child

he had so doatingly fondled in his infancy;—whilst Hamilton who had cherished no expectation of finding a father, had him at once thus unexpectedly revealed. Oh! their hearts swelled nigh to bursting—there was a moving principle within each breast, that spoke more forcibly than tongue could utter—it was the still small voice of the Creator, whispering in evidence of their kindred—it was the communion of heart with heart, in token of that bond which unites parental and filial love. It was impossible to view the spectacle unmoved. The unsophisticated Larry Laffan, though in his old age, cried like a child. Lilyburn, notwithstanding his eccentricities, had warm sympathies which though not evinced by such violent demonstrations as Larry's, were nevertheless not to be restrained, for the big drops rolled from his eyes, whilst a smile of pleasure settled on his countenance, as he contemplated this sudden and unexpected *dénouement*.

But this indulgence was not suffered to last long, others had caught the sound and joined the group. And first hobbled a very aged female, the weight of her body bending between a crutch and a stout stick. Her grey, or rather silvered hairs

were scantily hanging down beneath what is termed a mob cap, with long side lappets, and her cloak of serge was wrapped round her gaunt frame. "An what would yez wid me, Maurice Feaghan," exclaimed she, stopping in front of the outlaw; "is it them as is cross heening over the pit's mouth, as must sarve yer turn—would yez drag the body from the grave to do yez bidding;—oh ! then its meself is like the withered leaf of a tree blown about at every breath—och hone!"

"Aisy—aisy, Bridget, a lanna," uttered Feaghan, soothingly, and suiting his accent to his hearer; "shure an its yerself as always nursed and loved the darlin of the world, an he the child of Kathleen yer own dainty pet now?"

"Pace—pace, ye neer-do-well," muttered the old woman, "would you put the burning iron in the sore? Where are they now—the young—the beautiful—the brave—och hone? Ay, where are they now—their bones are unkivered and blach'd—the earth-worm has destroyed that dthress which once the silk-worm clothed. They are gone, Maurice Feaghan, and the angel of death has forgotten to call at the door of the aged, whose sowl longs to be at rest."

“The angel of life, Bridget—yes, the angel of life has yet a demand for your services,” uttered Feaghan with considerable mildness; “an may be them as you nursed in infancy, and cherished in manhood, are yet to the fore.”

“You spake to a cowl’d heart, Maurice Feaghan—a heart that is stown cowl’d, since the fire was extinguished on their hearth, and the craturs were scattered before the blast like the slaked ashes of their home!” answered the old woman, drawing her cloak more tightly around her, as if her aged limbs felt the icy chilliness she expressed.

“But the home shall be reared again, Bridget,” exclaimed the outlaw; “the fire shall be re-kindled on the hearth-stone, an the bite, an the sup, an lasheens of it, shall be for the owld, and the lame, and the stranger;—and there’ll be joy in the dwelling, an plenty in the bawn, and the right will get his own again.”

The old woman remained silent for several minutes, and appeared to be ruminating on visions of the past, that were now flitting like grey shadows before her. No one disturbed her meditations, and there was a stillness amongst the party as sudden as it was remarkable. At length Bridget slowly

and solemnly uttered, "Maurice Feaghan, is it decaving me you'd be?—an_yet no! I have felt a heavy hand pressing on my heart, but the blessed spirit of this place is lightening it up again, as the sight is keen upon me; oh! but it was here, Larry," and she waved one of her supports around her, "that the red blood ran like wather, and flaming divel's tools dealt death to the stout heart and to the strong hand. It's here it was that Dermot Delany met the proud O'Connor, who had robbed him of his bride, and their shteel was at each other's troats. The weight of more nor ninety years is upon my head, but oh! 'tis fresh in memory; I have it now before me, as the darlein knelt over his fallen body, and saved the life of him as was father to her born child, and him that was unborn coming into the black woreld—Cornalius the baccah, who owes his deformity to the blow Mike Hagan sthruck him down by—that's the O'Connor I mane. Yes, Maurice Feaghan, the flower was blighted, and when in the hour of nathur's call, an the pains were on her, it was then that Bridget was by her side till it was over, an she looked upon the little monsther with a shudther,—an died."

She paused for a minute or two and covered her face with the hood of her cloak, then again throwing it back, she glanced wildly around, as she exclaimed, "It's there they are now, with their dhioul's faces hacking and slashing—it's there are the bloody red-coats firing and stabbing—an there is the bright flame as glared upon the fray over bleeding bodies and the mangled dead!" She shuddered, as if actually the whole was now in view before her. "Oh, the cross be between me and harem, and the blessed saint of the well purtect me, for I was innocent then. That ruction was a cruel an a cursed deed, but pure as light to the hellish one which followed—I did their bidding—the rap-parees. I sowld meself, because it was united I wished them to be—that's Dermot and Kathleen. It's here it was, Maurice Feaghan, upon this very spot that I received the infant in my arems, an it smiling in the face of its destroyer—ay, it was here where I now stand that Dermot gave it to me to aise his great revenge. Oh! Kathleen, Kathleen, sainted sowl in glory, haven't I suffered for that same—oh! whirrasthrue, whirrasthrue, an it was that wrought all the mischief, and the divelry. The darlin of the world died in my

arems—Dermot brought the child up as his own—the young heir in his beauty and strength was sent beyand the says; whilst the crooked an the evil ushurped his property and place—an the woman who owned him, Ellein and the childther—oh! it was a hellish deed, to stheal the child.”

“It was Bridget—oh! I feel it was,” returned Feaghan, much agitated; “small good ever comes of such practices, an I know it well!—But there’s happiness yet in store—Father Fogharty will tell you so—an the pardon, an the peace.”

“Whisht—whisht, Maurice Feaghan,” responded Bridget, “the deed has been done, and cannot be recalled.—I saw the brothers, Terence and Cornalius, sthrugling for masthery over their father’s corpse—I spoke for Terence, but they heeded me not, and then he was again sent away, over the salt say—och hone—och hone—an where is he now?”

“It’s here forenent ye, he is, Bridget,” exclaimed Murtoch, as he stood in front of the old woman, “shure an ye must know me, as ye held in yer arms that night; an here too is the child of Elleen; shall I never see herself again, an my first-born darlin, of her sainted mother?”

Hamilton was about to reply, but Feaghan res-

trained him, rightly judging, that the chord of memory had vibrated in the aged woman's mind. As soon as Murtoch had begun to address her, though the instant before she had been bent down, and tottering under years and infirmity, yet in a moment she stood rigidly erect, and extending her withered, and shrivelled, but still boney arm, she gazed intently on the man; but the darkness had fallen into heavier gloom, and her sight was dim; still, her sense of hearing was as acute as ever:—

“Spake—spake again,” said she, in a voice shaken by agitation; “it is the music in my heart. Why? it is the sound of joy to my sowl achree! Oh, I have heard it, in the stillness of the night, and in the turmoil of the day—cowld and hungry—sick and faint, it has floated round me, in wailing and complaints, to blight my hours, and vex my spirit for the deed I done.—An do I hear it now from himself?—will my light not go out in desh-pair—is there a hope yet for my sowl? Spake to me again, Murtoch—spake out once more, I say,” and she assumed a tone and manner of command.

Murtoch, deeply affected, took her shrivelled hand, and would have promptly complied with her request: but Lilyburn stepped forward with an

air of consequence, "Haugh—well Mrs. Bridget," said he, "I think I can satisfy your doubts, for I am not very easily deceived in such matters. I can attest, from documents in my possession, that this gentleman, my client," and Lilyburn bowed, "I say my client, is *de facto* the identical Murtoch Delany."

"An who are you, that come between natur and her howly calling," demanded Bridget sternly, as she turned upon the counsellor. "My eyes cannot see him, for the night-mists are thickening around us; but oh, my heart hears his voice, and is glad. Yes, Murtoch it is yerself—yer ownself—the blessed spirit of the well is whispering it to me, an her anger is turned away. I feel her heavenly breathings come soft an warem to my face, Murtoch, tis yerself. Sir Terence Hamilton O'Connor, you are welcome."

Nothing could exceed the ardent and earnest congratulations which greeted the delighted man and his newly found son; who were shortly afterwards, alone, as the rest of the party, with Lilyburn, withdrew to a short distance, through the management of Feaghan, who wished nature to indulge in her operations, as well that he might

arrange the proceedings with the witnesses for their future government.

“Child of my Ellen—son of my heart,” exclaimed the agitated father, as he pressed the youth to his breast; “I long, yet fear, to inquire your history. I see by your uniform, that you are in the service of your country, and therefore am satisfied your course is honourable—but there are others, Hamilton, of whom I wish, yet dread to ask—and yet suspense is more horrible than certainty. Tell me then, my boy—tell me—your mother,” and he drew a long and painful respiration.

“She is in Heaven,” returned Hamilton, as tears and emotion almost choked his utterance. “She died in the presence of her Sovereign, who soothed her last moments.

“I had another child,” said the afflicted husband, restraining by a powerful effort this provocative to his grief; “a daughter, Hamilton.”

“She lives, my father,” replied the youth, “and I hope very shortly to see her in your embrace.”

“For that, thank Heaven!” fervently ejaculated the stricken man, “It is true I am bereaved—painfully bereaved—but God has not left me desolate—sit down my son, and give me a brief view of your

past career—the lengthened history we will have at some other time, when your uncle's wickedness has recoiled upon his own head, and I shall proudly see you the heir to a title and estate."

Hamilton complied with his parent's request, and gave a short outline of occurrences as far back as his memory would go, briefly touching upon the death of his mother, as he heard the account from his sister Ellen. But as I have introduced a new actor upon the scene, and that too when the curtain according to dramatic taste, ought probably to fall, I must claim the indulgence of my readers whilst I narrate, (particularly as the narration is intimately connected with my story,) the causes which separated the father from his wife and children, though the first origin of the affair will be readily understood from the language of poor old Bridget.

CHAPTER VII.

“There came to the beach a poor exile of Erin.”

MOORE.

THERE, perhaps, never was a spot of land whose capabilities for improvement, and whose population have suffered more from bad government, than Ireland. Considered rather in the light of a conquered country than as a part of the British empire, her rulers sought by coercion to keep the people in degraded subjection, in preference to elevating them in the scale of moral society by kindness and conciliation. The lower orders of Irish were, naturally, acutely sensitive, quick-witted, and sudden in quarrel. Ignorance on the one hand, and priestcraft on the other, had caused these qualities to degenerate into cunning, jealousy, and revenge. In England, even in the smallest hamlet, the principal portion of the community were well-disposed, and their good character and conduct acted as a check upon the evil-minded and mischevous, beyond the restraints imposed by the laws. But in Ireland, where all

classes felt, or fancied, that they were suffering from tyrannical aggressions inflicted by the stranger, men of lawless passions gained an ascendancy over the popular mind, and some through inclination, others through fear, bound themselves by oath to exterminate their oppressors. The barriers of restraint were broken down—they all had one end in view, but, unhappily, they left the means of attaining that end in the hands of designing men, who, under the guise of patriotism, lured their deluded followers into violence, outrage, and murder.

Discriminating justice, mildly tempered with mercy, would have wrought a remedy for the evils that afflicted this beautiful, but convulsed island. Unfortunately, however, the innocent and the guilty were confounded together, and the legislature, either forgetting, or wilfully overlooking the real condition of the people, partially admitted that their complaints were well founded, yet at the same time determined to act upon the principle that the vindication of the laws should precede the exercise of equity. Now it was not the laws themselves, but the abuse of that power and authority with which the laws invested the agents and instruments of their execution, that spurred the people to insurrection; and when the enforcing of the legislatorial

principle was entrusted to the very individuals whose excesses had produced rebellion, the result was by no means problematical—it resolved itself into an axiom which after-years have fully verified. The vindication of the law has been the war-shout of one party—justice to Ireland the rallying cry of the other party.

The year 1783, during the period when the most strenuous efforts were used to drive Pitt from office, and the disaffected took advantage of the hostile feeling against the minister—the volunteers arose in Ireland; and when they found their plans did not meet with the success anticipated, a national congress was threatened, and it was deemed expedient to select for punishment many of the better class of yeomen, for the purpose of intimidating the rest; nor was it absolutely requisite that the convicted party should be really guilty of crime, for it was enough that he had rendered himself obnoxious to persons in power; evidence could readily be purchased, juries corrupted, and even the judges of the land tampered with to procure condemnation, and many an unfortunate perished whose only fault was, labouring under the malediction of some one whose malice might be gratified, or whose interests might be promoted, by the removal of the aggrieved.

It was in this year (1783), that a convict ship quitted Dublin Bay, with a freight of unhappy beings, who were sentenced to be transported from their native land, some for seven, others for fourteen years, while not a few were sent from the shores they loved, for the term of their natural life. Amongst them were characters of the most abandoned description—footpads, housebreakers, shedders of human blood, men capable of planning any enormity, and not wanting in animal courage to carry it into operation. But there were also several who had been well to do in the world—substantial yeomen, whom the authorities deemed it politic or convenient to get rid of; and amongst these latter was a young man of handsome exterior, whose countenance bore the impress of candour, nor could the intense grief, which almost overwhelmed him, destroy the stamp of nobility which nature had bestowed upon him; he was indeed bowed down with the weight of his misfortunes, and, as disease had seized upon his frame, his duration in this life was not expected to be very long.

Murtoch Delaney was the reputed son of Dermot Delaney, the individual introduced in the first volume as the leader of the rebels in the affair of

the Holy Well. Through many years the chief maintained his station as a captain of a formidable band in the county Tipperary; but after his boyhood, Murtoch no longer joined his supposed father in his lawless pursuits, but settled himself quietly down on a snug farm as a cultivator of the earth. Not that he was indifferent to the wrongs of his countrymen, for there were times when his indignation would burst forth, and he lent his ready aid to punish the proud oppressor; but Murtoch had united himself to a young and lovely woman, and his heart clung with fond and fervent affection to his wife, his children, and his home.

An affray in which Dermot was severely wounded, and Larry Laffan, the driver, was taken prisoner whilst trying to rescue his chief, brought Murtoch under the lash of power: for Dermot, being conveyed by his followers to Murtoch's cottage, was there sheltered and concealed till death terminated his career. But, previously to dissolution, the dying man made such communications, both to the priest and Murtoch, as convinced them that the latter was not the son of the rebel leader, but the undoubted heir to rank and wealth, from which he had been surreptitiously stolen away in his infancy. But no

time was allowed him to avail himself of this information, so as to seek a restoration to his paternal roof—that very night an armed force surrounded his dwelling—he was torn away from all he loved and cherished, and, escorted by dragoons, was conveyed to Dublin jail, whither Larry Laffan had already preceded him, and who, at their first interview, confirmed from his own knowledge the facts that had been revealed by Dermot.

Murtoch lost not a moment in writing to his real parent: but the letter was suppressed by his brother, who could not endure the thoughts of resigning the brilliant prospects that were opening before him to another; and, therefore, cautiously instituted a secret inquiry into every circumstance of the case. He even visited the prisoner in his confinement, and whilst the result left not a shadow of a doubt as to their fraternity, he hardened his heart against the truth, and determined to exert himself to the very utmost to get him sent out of the country. With the courts of law, in the state in which they then were, this was no very difficult matter. All access was denied to the wretched man, and though, through the clemency and kindness of the jailor, he was permitted to have an interview with his almost heart-

broken wife, who had followed him to the metropolis, and had endeavoured to interest persons of influence in her behalf, yet the prompt and active machinations of the brother defeated all her purposes—her husband was tried, and convicted of gross acts of whiteboyism through the evidence of suborned witnesses; his defence, and declaration of his real name, were totally disregarded—the jury found him guilty, and the judge sentenced him to be transported for life. The effect upon the faithful wife and fond mother was of the most distressing nature. She tried to obtain an interview with her husband's father—but all her attempts were frustrated, and herself and children threatened with punishment as impostors; she was driven from the place by blows, and, on her return to Dublin, was allowed a few minutes with her husband, to bid him farewell, and then, with her children, she quitted the country for ever. On the day subsequently, her husband was embarked, with Larry Laffan and many others, and the ship almost immediately got under weigh, and proceeded on her voyage with a fair wind.

Unhappily, several of the convicts brought the jail distemper on board with them, and their crow-

ded state in close confinement, with the want of ventilation and total absence of cleanliness, soon spread the disease amongst the rest. Though the surgeon tried every means within his power to stay the plague, in order to secure the head-money for all he could carry alive to the colony, yet the deteriorated quality of his medicines, and the bad condition of the provisions, rendered his exertions useless, and the spectacle on the platform, (a temporary erection in the hold for sick convicts) every morning was truly appalling; the dead and the dying were mingled together; whilst groans and shrieks, cries for mercy, and blasphemous imprecations, made the heart sick.

At first, the burial service was performed over those who had expired; but the frequency of death, together with the necessity of immediately launching the body into the deep, wore away all impressions of solemnity; every form was abandoned, and the sufferer had scarcely breathed his last, and life was pronounced by the surgeon to be extinct, when a weight was attached to the corpse, and it was thrown into its ocean grave.

Sultry weather and calms for several days aided the work of destruction; not a breath of air de-

scended into that lazar-house (fumigation was then unpractised); and the stench arising from below tainted the atmosphere, so as to render it difficult to breathe. Hour after hour passed on; sometimes a light breeze would spring up, so as in some measure to purify the vessel from the infectious vapours; then, again, calms and heavy rains brought a succession of horrors, and the living looked upon each other as those who were appointed to die.

Fearfully increased the horrors of those death-scenes; there was none to impart the consolations of religion, nor to direct the mind to the only hope of rescue from eternal condemnation; hardened and unrepentant guilt was hurried from time into eternity, and who could read their doom?

But all that the survivors had hitherto endured was now to be heightened and aggravated by a heavy gale of wind, which rendered it necessary to batten down the hatches, so that both light and ventilation were excluded, and the heat and noxious vapour became unbearable. Many of the poor creatures in their weakness fell to the deck, where they rolled from side to side with the motion of the ship, striking against each other, and not unfrequently

bestowing feeble blows in their pugnacity. Grasping and struggling, to cling to whatever their hands might touch, but dragged away from their fancied security by the weight of their own bodies—maimed and bruised till utterly exhausted, they were dashed unresistingly hither and thither, till, after suffering tortures of the most harassing and agonizing nature, their tenacity to life was subdued, and they yielded up their breath.

In vain the convicts entreated for permission to ascend to the deck ; the request was peremptorily refused, and those who attempted it were thrust back again with violence ; still others pressed on, till maddened and made desperate by resistance, they rushed to the hatchways, preferring the chance of immediate death, to a prolongation of misery that could only have a similar termination. The hatches were forced off, and though several of the convicts were hurled back again, mangled and bleeding, yet the greater portion succeeded in making good their lodgment upon deck, where the elements were raging as fierce as the human passions that prolonged the deadly strife.

But the soldiers who formed the guard were enervated, from both bodily disease and sea-sickness,

whilst the terrors of the storm held a strong influence over the minds of all ; at length, after a feeble resistance, the convicts became the victors, but destitute of an avowed leader, and having gained their point, they remained perfectly quiet ; indeed, all they seemed to desire was to escape from suffocation, and respire the pure air of heaven, for as soon as the gale abated, and the soldiers resumed their energies, they readily submitted to the officers, merely stipulating for their not being forced to go below.

Ten dead and almost shapeless bodies were on that evening brought on deck, and consigned to the yet turbulent ocean ; one after the other, the heavy splash was heard in the waters ; a shuddering crept over those who witnessed the burial, and saw the unshrouded corpse descend into the great charnel-house of the deep, to add to the myriads who had preceded it. During the night, five others were at separate times launched over the gangway ; the surgeon declared that his utmost skill was baffled, and he looked forward in expectation of the death of many more.

Baffling and light winds succeeded to the storm, and the convicts, emboldened by their late achievement, were no longer patient under restraint, or

inclined to yield to rule. On more than one occasion they had plundered the spirit and provision rooms, and intoxication rendering them insensible to personal danger, they recklessly rushed upon the bayonets, or daringly bared their breasts to the bullets of the guards, so that numbers who escaped disease, fell in the heat of conflict.

The breeze at length became steady, and they made the Canary Islands, just being enabled to fetch Ferro, where the ship was anchored about dusk in the evening; and such was deemed the urgency of their situation, that without waiting for the governor's reply to a request that the convicts might be disembarked, they were speedily landed in a small bay; tents were erected, and before daylight in the morning, such was the alacrity of the unhappy beings to escape from the dreadful confinement to which they had been subjected, that every thing was snugly arranged, the sick and wounded were extended on their beds beneath the canvass coverings, and the surgeon was actively administering to their several necessities.

Ferro is the smallest and most barren and arid of the Canaries, but nevertheless, it is densely populated. When this invasion of territorial

right became known, the governor sent positive orders to the captain to re-embark his freight and put to sea without delay, as he was determined, in case of a refusal, to open a fire from the fortifications. In vain the captain pleaded the urgency of the case, and promised compliance as early as it was practicable ; in vain he assured the authorities, that the moment he had cleansed his vessel, every soul should be received on board ; the commands of the governor were imperative, as the population were rising *en-masse* to enforce compliance.

Self-preservation, as well as a feeling of regard for the lives of his crew, instructed the captain that the thing was impossible ; he himself was already labouring under severe indisposition, whilst most of the people were on the sick list, and more than half of them unable to work, so that to receive the convicts on board, and to continue his voyage, presented nothing but certain death to all. He continued, therefore, to pass the day away in negotiation, whilst, as a matter of favour as well as humanity, fresh provisions and water were supplied, and he promised to be clear of the land by daylight the next day. This appeased the commotion on shore, and the vessel remained undisturbed by the

batteries. The captain fulfilled his word, but not according to the construction of the governor, for no sooner had darkness spread itself over the ocean, than he quietly purchased his anchor, and with the breeze off the land, the ship drifted clear of the roadsted till she attained a proper distance, when she was suddenly clothed in canvas from the deck to the truck, and at day-break not a vestige of her was to be seen—but she left the poor wretched convicts behind her.

Exasperated at what he considered a breach of good faith, and fearful of the spread of the disease amongst his ownpeople, he cut off all communication with the tents, and the surgeon having been withdrawn, the helpless creatures were without medical assistance, and nearly without food or physic. Several who were in a state of convalescence, had been appointed to attend upon the rest, and it was decided upon that they should go to the town, and make representations to the authorities of the situation of the whole, and implore their help. Six were selected, and these hastened on their mission ; but their progress was soon checked by a discharge of musketry, which, though it did not take effect, was evidently designed to shew them what their

fate would inevitably be if they persevered in advancing.

The deputation returned to their companions in misery, and several hours passed in unavailing murmurs and execrations against the captain who had so basely deserted them. At the same time their wretchedness was increased by quarrelling and fighting amongst themselves. Sick at heart, Murtoch Delaney and Larry Laffan quitted the tents and wandered down to the rocky shore, where, after bathing themselves in the sea, they crept into a natural chasm between the rocks, having a perpendicular face to the water that washed the base, and allowing of just sufficient space for them to lie down at full length.

In the mean time, the people at the tents, irritated by privation, mustered in a body and again proceeded towards the town, where a council had been held to decide upon what was the best mode of treating them. The place was in a thorough tumult; the inhabitants firmly believed that the convicts were afflicted with the plague, whose infection would soon reach them, and as they dreaded still more the idea of contagion, so, when they saw the unfortunate men advancing, they seized their arms,

and of all who quitted the tents not one was left alive; volley after volley was poured in; retreat was useless; the swift messenger of death overtook them, nor did the firing cease whilst a limb of the poor wretches continued to move.

The thirst for blood is generally insatiate, and the inhabitants having completed this work of destruction, determined to put a finishing stroke to their desire for carnage, by annihilating the sufferers that remained alive in the tents, and thus at once putting an end to their own dread of the terror-exciting plague. For this purpose, two six-pounders were dragged within short range, and incessant discharges of grape-shot tore down the canvas coverings, exposed the sick and dying to public gaze, and rendered them more distinct objects for indiscriminate slaughter. Some mustering all their strength, tried to escape: but their mangled bodies and shattered limbs soon gave evidence of the correctness of the aim against them, whilst yells, shrieks, and groans, rose wildly in the air. Horribly revolting was the spectacle, as the shot ploughed up the ground and turned the carcases over and over, rending and tearing them to pieces; nor did the firing cease till the butchered victims

gave no signs of life. The raising of a hand in the last convulsive agony, was a signal for the renewal of the discharges, and the quivering of the limbs as the precursor of dissolution, brought down showers of grape, till the diabolical deed was fully consummated. Not a soldier or an inhabitant was found hardy enough to approach the supposed infected place, to see how far this terrible execution had taken effect—the dead were left alone in their desolation.

Murtoch and Larry had been distressed listeners to the firing, and the noise of the mingling shrieks and cries were distinctly borne to their ears, till the love of self prevailed over every other feeling, and they continued in their hiding-place, too truly conjecturing the cause of the dreadful sounds; nor could they forbear congratulating each other on their present safety. Still they conversed but little, and when the bellowing of the cannon ceased, and the silence of death succeeded, they crouched closer together, and spoke only in whispers. The cavity they had fortunately crept into, was sheltered from the scorching rays of the sun by a projecting crag, and though they could not expect to remain there for any length of time, yet it now afforded them a

place of shelter, and they hoped, on account of its almost isolated situation, to escape observation till something should occur to better their condition.

Evening once more came down with its murky darkness, and as every thing remained tranquil, Murtoch and his companion crept from their concealment, and cautiously advanced towards the spot where the tents had stood; stopping occasionally to listen for any sound that might betray the presence of a friend or foe. But all was tranquil except the murmuring of the sea as it broke upon the beach, and the distant hum of human voices from the town.

“The tents are gone,” exclaimed Murtoch; “we ought to see them now, notwithstanding the gloom, for it was hereabouts they stood.”

“Och, but its kilt and smashed intirely they are,” returned Larry, as he stumbled over the shattered remains of a corpse; “och hone—och hone—pillaloo, pillaloo!”

“Whisht Larry—whisht!” whispered Delaney earnestly, for Laffan had uttered his cry of sorrow louder than prudence would have dictated; “the tents are down sure enough, and the boys are all dead upon the sod. But whisht, Larry—its alive we are—”

“ And manes to keep so, plase God,” uttered Larry, called to a discreet sense of his situation, and at once abandoning his expressions of grief. “ But let us get out o’ this, Misther Murtoch ; a dead body had always a nat’ral dislike to my company at any time, and maybe it’s not pleasant to ’em now.”

For a few minutes they stood contemplating the horrible scene of carnage, as far as the gloom of night would permit them, but both felt too powerfully the influence of superstitious awe to remain long in the midst of the shattered remnants of humanity, already tainting the air with the peculiar smell which arises from flesh wounds on a field of battle. “ Make haste, Larry,” exclaimed Murtoch ; “ get some of the bedding and canvas together ; never mind it’s being torn, it will do to lie upon.”

“ Thru for you, Misther Murtoch,” responded Larry, who seldom forgot or neglected the respect due to his companion in misfortune ; “ shure an’ they’ll make the rocks softer anyhow, an’ the boys ’ull niver be wanting ’em again. May the curse o’ Cromell light upon the murdthrrs !”

Twice during that night did they revisit the

spot, and carry off fragments of covering, and one or two articles that remained unbroken to hold water, and to drink out of. A small quantity of bread was also found in a bag, which to them was an invaluable prize, as otherwise they would have been entirely destitute of food. Wearied with their toil, they placed their bedding in the cavity, and Delaney crept in.

“An faix, Misther Murtoch,” said Larry, “it’s snug we are jist; not but comparisons are oderous anyhow, but it’s like a cock muscle you look there, betwixt your two shells.”

“My heart is very sad, Larry,” answered Murtoch, “for I’m thinking of my once happy little home, and Elleen and the darlins.”

“An it’s them wur the delight o’ the world, Misther Murtoch,” responded his companion, “but rest aisey awhile—achree. It’s maybe our liberty we’ll get if we can ounly persuade ’em in Ireland that we died with the rest o’ the boys.”

“Ay, Larry, the hope of once more beholding, of again pressing to my heart those whom I love, will keep life in me. We have been wonderfully preserved during the massacre, it is certain, and Providence may extend its succouring hand to take us altogether out of this.”

“ An what you say thrue, is all right anyhow,” said Larry, approvingly ; “ so I’ll just take a taste of a snooze to myself, as there’s no knowinst what sort of a wake I shall have.”

The poor fellows slept soundly, and awoke with the daylight, much refreshed ; the sea breeze came cool and delightful into their little nook, and after partaking of a small portion of their food, as they did not dare to stir out lest they should be discovered, they once more composed themselves to rest.

Darkness again shrouded the face of nature, when Murtoch and his companion quitted their retreat for the purpose of returning to the wreck of the tents, in order to procure whatever useful thing they could pick up, supposing that the inhabitants had feared to go near the dreaded spot. And they were right in their conjectures—all remained as they had left it—the mangled dead in their silent sleep, and Murtoch shuddered when he beheld so many human forms lying about him, yet could not hear a breath from any one of them.

Through a considerable portion of that night, they employed themselves in removing various articles to their cell, one of the most valuable of which was

a nine gallon breaker of fresh water, and, though in their weak condition, they had great difficulty in carrying it, yet they accomplished their task, and with about a dozen pounds of bread, considered themselves fortunate in laying in so good a stock.

“ I have been thinking, Larry,” said Murtoch, as they stowed themselves away on the approach of daylight, “ I have been thinking, that if we can get a little stronger, we might contrive some scheme to make our escape, for at all events we cannot stop here very long.”

“ Oh, then it’s yerself as bangs ivery thing in regard o’ schaming,” responded Larry. “ Faix, an couldn’t we borrow the loan of a boat ; for sorry the bit I’d think o’ staling it, and row back to Banthry agin.”

“ You forget the distance Larry—the storms—the dangers, and the want of provisions,” answered Murtoch, mournfully ; “ besides, we neither of us have any knowledge which way to go.”

“ An that’s thrue, Misther Murtoch,” assented his companion ; “ barring the managing of a boat, seeing as myself has had some experience that way, when I follered the fishing line ; and as for purvisions, faix, and d’ye think I’ve forgot how to catch fish ?”

“ Without net, hook, or line, Larry ! and no fire to dress them, if the miracle could be performed,” uttered Murtoch. “ No, no, Larry ; the thing would be impossible ; but we might get out to sea in a boat, and perhaps be picked up by some ship.”

“ By the hookey an’ so we might,” assented Larry, joyfully ; “ or, what would you say to going out o’ sight o’ land, and then coming back and telling ’em we’ve been shipwrecked at say.”

“ And being in the boat we stole—or, according to your own views—borrowed from them, do you imagine they would believe us, eh ?” argued Murtoch, smiling at his countryman’s simplicity.

“ By me sowl, an’ that ’ud be rather awkward anyhow,” answered Larry ; “ I forgot the boat would be blowing upon us. Och ! but my shameing ’ud soon get us into the throuble again, Misther Murtoch, and so it’s with you I’ll lave it jist.”

Delaney lay for some time devising plans, whilst his less sensitive companion coiled himself away in the recess, and was soon fast asleep ; for Larry, though more than two-and-twenty years had passed over his head, since his first introduction to the reader, was the same unthinking, reckless being as

ever. The unhappy man laid contemplating his hard destiny, and almost despairing of ever beholding those he loved again. “ Oh, Elleen, Elleen !” said he, “ blessed angel, who bore up my feet when I would have stumbled, and ministered to my wants in the hours of affliction, of sickness, and of peril, where—where are you now ? The deep communion of my spirit with thine is no longer of an earthly character. I cannot think of thee but with saintly worship. Thou art dead, Elleen—I know that thou art dead, for it is thy beatified essence that whispers to me in the silence of night, and soothes the anguish of my lone and desolate heart. And where are my own darleins, once the delight of my eyes ? Och hone ! cast upon the wide world as orphans ;—fertility is to them as barrenness—no friends, no defenders ; hungry, thirsty, and cowl'd. Oh, my brain would take fire and be scorched up were I to think on—”

He paused for a few minutes and covered his face with his hands, as he felt the scalding drops rush from his eyes, for though no one was looking at him, yet he did not wish even the light of the day to witness such an outbreak of his grief as totally unmanned him.

In a few minutes he resumed his exclamations,

“And why am I here?” said he; “I am innocent—thou, God, knowest I am innocent, and will aid me to avenge myself. Great and Eternal Being, who of all thy creatures have I ever wilfully injured or wronged? When were my ears closed to the cry of distress for help—or the wail of sorrow for comfort? When was my arm paralyzed in defence of the oppressed and helpless, or my hand idle when the perishing asked for succour? But here I am a prisoner—a wretched convict on a foreign shore, with the enemy seeking my life.”

It was on the fourth day of their confinement, that, early in the morning, they observed a small boat with one man in it approach seaward to a short distance of the place of their concealment, where he let go his anchor, and was soon busily engaged in fishing. Anxiously and almost breathlessly did the pent-up sufferers watch the operation, and once only did any intimation pass between them, and then in a mere whisper, “If he comes ashore,” said Murtoch, “be ready, Larry—that boat must be ours.”

“Jist to borry it a bit, Misther Murtoch! faix, an I’m the boy for that same,” responded Larry, in a similar mode of communication.

For four hours did they lay in a painful state of suspense, for they dared scarcely to stir lest they might attract the man's attention and alarm him; his sport appeared to be excellent, and at the expiration of the time mentioned he hauled in his lines, made them up, and then plying his paddles, in a few minutes whisked out of sight.

"Mona mon diaoul!" ejaculated Larry as soon as he had disappeared, "but it's a brave chance we have lost—bad manners to the spalpeen for that same."

"He has been too successful not to come again, Larry," observed Murtoch, "and that too before long, or I shall be greatly mistaken; but there's no chance of his landing, unless we could contrive to decoy him ashore."

"Decoy!—what, as they do ducks?" said Larry, inquiringly; "well then, Misther Murtoch, avourneen—it's poor struck sinners we are, an not a taste o' woosky to bless oursels with, barring the wather in the cask."

"And that cask placed in the little white sandy nook there, will be the very thing to tempt him to come ashore," said Delaney, pointing to the spot he named, a short distance from their cave, and so

bounded by craggy rocks, as to offer safe places in which to secrete themselves; "we must not go yet, but as soon as it is dark we'll inspect the spot, and arrange accordingly."

"Its yerself as has the onderstanding, any how. Misther Murtoch," said Larry; "an what for not, seeing as ye're a born gentleman on the right side of the shtocking?"

"Your communications on that subject have most certainly greatly astonished me," responded Delaney, "but the individual whose name I bear never once hinted such a thing till just before his death."

"But there's them as knows it as well, and some better than Larry Laffan," said the other; "Mike Hagan by token"—

"The rascal!" muttered Murtoch, powerfully agitated, "the false-swearing, perjured villain—the curse of the Almighty rest upon him."

"An there was them others as swore again you, Tim Donavan, and Casey," said Larry; "oh! the divel's cess to them, the tieves—shure an they know'd all about it; an there's Maurice Feaghan, an owld Bridget, an ever so many more sworn upon the gospels not to shplit till death and after."

"If there are so many records, it is strange that

not one tittle of what you related should not have come to my knowledge before ! Captain Delaney always treated me as his nephew,—he spared no pains or expense to give me education, and when I married Elleen—oh ! sorrow and grief, and wailing to my heart, does her name bring ;” he spoke more broadly to the comprehension of his hearer. “Oh ! Larry, its kilt and smashed my heart is entirely ;” and he groaned heavily as he covered his face with his hands, and wept.

“Och, murther ! and its a babby ye’re making me,” blubbered Larry ; “shure an you’ve the way wid you for a born gentleman, an its meself as ’ull see you resthored to the dignity of the owld ancient race afore you die yet ! Arrah, Misther Murtoch avourneen—rouse your sowl a bit, and don’t give way ; we’ll have the vengeance on the murthering villians when we gets back.”

“And when will that be, my friend—and how is it to be accomplished ?” demanded the other sorrowfully. “If we return we shall be again apprehended, and what would the evidence of two convicts effect against those my enemies can bring to condemn me ?”

“Apprehended ?—what taken up again ?” asked

Larry ; “ ah ! thin, don’t mention it—isn’t it dead and kilt we are along wid de rest—shot into smithe-reens—here a leg and there an arem—and how the divel are we to come to life again ? Och ! we are somebody else now.”

The person addressed made no reply, but seemed to have fallen into a dreamy musing; whilst Larry, after taking a drink of water, and wishing it was poteen, composed himself to sleep.

That night they examined the spot, and having placed the cask in a conspicuous situation well up the beach, they found a low rock, midway between it and the water, behind which they could lie down, so as not to be seen by any person afloat. A little before daylight they took their station; but hour after hour passed away, and no fisherman appeared; so that at night they returned to their solitary hole disheartened and sick, from having laid so long exposed to the heat of the sun. Their bread was now becoming exhausted, and Murtoch determined should the next day afford them no chance of getting away, to go along the beach during the darkness of the succeeding night, and trust to chance for the future.

A second time, at day-break, they posted them-

selves as before, using the precaution, however, of taking some covering to shield off the intense rays of the sun ; but again they were disappointed ; and the companions in misfortune set out to explore the neighbourhood of the town. The night was extremely dark and gloomy, and they wandered outside the fortifications, till they became bewildered. No star sent forth its light to guide them—not a place could they discover where they might obtain food ; and after a vain search till nearly daylight, they endeavoured to retrace their way to a place of refuge. But this was no easy task, and it was not till they stumbled over the unburied, and now putrid remains of their former companions, that they ascertained their whereabouts.

Hastily retreating from the offensive and disgusting spot, they pursued their way, their minds reduced to the very verge of despair, when, on nearing the point round which it was necessary for them to go to their place of concealment, the noise of oars struck upon their ears. It was yet too dark for them to distinguish the character of the vessel whence the sounds proceeded, but they ascertained by the direction, that a boat was pulling along-shore towards them.

“Its the fisherman, may be,” whispered Larry; “early morning is a good time for hooking ’em;—howly Saint Patrick, be our friend.”

“Whisht, Larry,” returned Delaney in the same low tone; and, stooping down, he laid his ear near the ground for several minutes. At length he rose up; “let’s to the rocks, Larry,” said he, “and carry the keg wid yer—I really believe it is the fisherman.”

The poor fellows lost no time in making their dispositions—the breaker was again placed in a conspicuous situation as a decoy, and they laid themselves down as before amongst the rocks. The sounds of the oars continued to advance, and by the light of the opening day, they perceived a small boat sweep round the point, and soon afterwards come to an anchor, nearly abreast of them.

“Its himself then,” whispered Larry; “och! now, and may the howly saints give him the best of eyesight this blessed morning, barring he’s not an exciseman, for its them by the powers that can see a tub blindfold, and would snap at the bit cask quicker nor a fish at the bait. Shaint Pathrick send you the luck wid the hooks, for its ourselves jist as manes to be in at the tasting of ’em. Och!

then, Misther Murtoch, an he's the divel at hauling 'em in, I'm thinking."

"Rest aisy, Larry—rest aisy," said Murtoch, in the same low tone, "if you think so loud, the man will hear you, and won't come nigh us."

Thus cautioned, they both laid perfectly still till the glorious sun shed abroad his beautiful beams that grew into perfect daylight. "And what is he doing now, Larry," whispered Delaney to his companions, whose position afforded him a greater facility of seeing without being seen.

"Och! then, by the hookey, but it's himself as is bothered intirely in regard o' the tub," responded Larry, cautiously, peeping forth from his hiding place; "faix, an he's cotcht sight of that same, an is looking at it wid all the longing in natur.—His lines are up, an now he's staring round him jist;—oh! the top o'the morning to you, an up comes the anchor."

"He has done fishing then," said Delaney, in a tone of dejection, "and is most likely going to return."

"Oh! divel the haporth o' return in him, and the tub to the fore," said Larry, judging of the man's intentions by what his own would have been, under

similar circumstances; “shure an he’s a Spanish gauger, for now he’s out oars, and by the piper here he comes. Arrah, you sowl, be ready, for it’s net him we shall this time.”

The man in the punt approached slowly and cautiously towards the shore, as if he had not accurately made out what the object that attracted him was; but the moment he had ascertained it to be a cask, he pulled bravely in; and the confederates, whilst almost withholding their breath, lest they should excite suspicion, heard the grating of the boat’s nose upon the beach as she grounded. They were both well aware of their weakness from emaciation and hunger, so as to be scarcely equal together to one strong athletic man:—besides, the fatigue of their night’s excursion had greatly wearied them, and their hearts beat with such tumultuous agitation, as to render them incapable of coping with any powerful antagonist. Happily, however, the individual they had to contend against was a diminutive old man, and as he passed them in eager expectation of obtaining his supposed prize, they sprang up and seized him without difficulty; indeed his alarm and astonishment was so great, that he offered no resistance.

“By the blood of a poker an he’s our’s,” exclaimed Larry, with delight; “howld still ould gentleman, whilst I clap this wristband round your arems;” and Laffan proceeded to pinion him with a piece of cord.

“Sancta Maria!” exclaimed the fisherman, as he gazed upon his captors, “mercy—mercy; only mercy, for the love of the Virgin.”

This was spoken in a language which neither Delaney nor Larry understood; “plase to translate what ye’re saying into English, or Irish, if its all the same to you,” said the latter; “I ounly larned one tongue, and that I could niver read. Bad manners to you, be aisy, do.”

As rapid as their agitation and strength would permit, the pair conveyed the old man to the boat, into which they also put the breaker, with the remainder of the water, and the rags they had used to lie upon in their place of concealment; the whole of their arrangements occupied but a few minutes, and as soon as they were completed they lunched their small vessel on the ocean.

“Arrah, pull dis way, Misther Murtoch,” said Larry, instructing his companion in the mode of handling his oar, for Delaney was a perfect stranger

to every detail connected with a boat ; and the first essay of the pair was anything but successful, as far as it regarded making progress from the land.

The unfortunate fisherman laid moaning in the bottom of the punt, and though Larry tried to console him, yet as neither comprehended the language of the other, they made but sorry work in the way of conversation. For two hours did Murtoch and Larry ply their oars unceasingly, but the boat made so many courses, sometimes spinning entirely round, that they gained barely four miles from the place of starting. At this distance they relaxed from their labours to indulge in rest, and to examine what their prize contained. There was some fine rock cod ; a few cat-fish, and various other kinds ; a loaf of bread, and some hard cheese ; a stone bottle with water, and a glass one with nearly a pint of aquadiente, which Larry declared was the greatest treasure of the whole, on account of its “tinder connection and relationship to poteen.”

“And now, Larry,” said Delaney, “we are out at sea—though we must very soon give the land a wider neighbourhood. It is a pity we cannot communicate our wishes to the prisoner, as he might

direct us how to proceed, and thereby ensure his own safety, for I have no desire to hurt a hair of his head. Unbind him, Larry, and let him share our meal if he will."

"Och, then, Mister Murtoch, but he's had a belly full lately, and small sense there'd be in giving him what we want ourselves," returned Larry.

"Do as you are bid, Larry. Providence has provided for us: let us have a fellow feeling for others," commanded Delaney.

The Irishman complied, and the old man, sadly bewailing his fate, pointed to the island, and then closing his hands in the attitude of supplication, entreated them to have compassion upon him for the sake of his family. But, though they guessed by his gestures that he requested to be put on shore, not one word of his harangue did they understand, though Larry, not to be outdone in the way of a "noration," as he called it, made a long speech, in which he argued the possibility of "some ship picking 'em up at say, and then they would give him his boat again an welcome, with a million thanks for the use of it—ounly it was back to ould Ireland they were determined upon getting as

soon as they could—howly St. Patrick standing their friend. An shure,” continued Larry, pointing to a sail standing in for the land, “its herself is coming yonder there.”

Murtoch looked towards the vessel, whose white sails showed like a cluster of pearls on a dark blue crest, and he doubted as to the prudence of approaching too near her, lest she might belong to some of the islands; but Larry overruled his objections, and the craft observing a boat pulling towards her, very naturally shaped her course accordingly, and in a short time they were alongside. The old fisherman, who had remained perfectly quiet all this time (as Larry believed satisfied with the eloquence of his speech), suddenly became garrulous, and poured forth his complaints with so much volubility, that the Irishman’s address was totally eclipsed. The vessel was a Spanish polacca, bound to Teneriffe. Murtoch and Larry were once more prisoners, and on their arrival, were sentenced without trial to imprisonment for stealing the boat.

Here they remained in durance—the only thing they had to complain of, as every requisite but liberty was amply enjoyed—for several years, when,

on the change of governors, a jail release took place, and they were allowed to quit Santa Cruz in a trader for Cadiz—from thence they got to Gibraltar, and were ultimately landed near Bantry Bay in Ireland.

Had Murtoch acted with discretion, he would have endeavoured to interest some legal men to procure his recognition, and a restitution of his rights ; but, receiving information that his father was drawing near the last moments of existence, he determined at once on visiting O'Connor Hall. As for Larry, finding he could not dissuade his companion from his purpose, he started off into the mountains, where he made no doubt of obtaining shelter and protection.

CHAPTER VIII.

“Hold thy peace :—

He that hath suffered this disordered spring
Hath now himself met with the fall of leaf.”

RICHARD II.

It was in the same gorgeously splendid apartment that has already been mentioned as the scene of interview between the dwarf and his wife, when Feaghan bore in the body of the dead child, that the mis-shapen being was pacing to and fro with uncertain purpose and unsteady steps, whilst a restless and agonized impatience characterized his whole proceedings. Sometimes he would stop short in his walk, as if struck by a sudden paralysis—then his whole frame became convulsed as he stared wildly around him, and clutched his delicate white hands together, with symptoms of terror that he in vain sought to repress.

The descending sun of an autumnal evening poured its rich hues through the windows, impart-

ing a glowing warmth of tint to every thing in the interior, and manifesting the superiority of nature over the works of art. But the glorious dispensation of the beautiful rays was lost upon the being whose heart was a prey to keen remorse, and bowed down with crouching alarm before the influence of fear.

“Oh, that it could be recalled,” exclaimed he in those discordant tones that contrasted so strangely with the usual melody of his voice. “Oh, that it could be recalled—but the deed—the hellish deed is done!” he shuddered, “and I am now—what?—what? Oh, horrible, detestable, damnable act, more cruel than any yet ever perpetrated by man! Ha-a,” he almost shrieked, as a passing cloud obscured the light of the sun, and suddenly darkened the room; “the shadows are falling thick around me, and I am alone! Oh, God of Heaven!—God of Heaven? the French philosophy denies the existence of such a being—where and what is that God? where and what is that heaven? I have never yet met with one individual, however learned, or however pious, who could solve the mystery—and yet I feel the solemn, deep conviction that it is no deception. There *must* be an hereafter—else

why does my very soul shrink back appalled at the crimes I have committed? If there is no future state of punishment, what have I to fear, and why does my spirit sink with apprehensions of unseen, unknown peril? Have I ever declined encountering personal danger? has pain of body ever wrung from me a puling cry of anguish? Never! What, then, can it be that stirs up so terrible a strife between the body and the mind. The corporeal frame is strong to endure, and defies the worst that may befall, but the mental energies overpower the body and reduce it to childish weakness—else why this trembling in every limb that would stand firm against wound or blow. French philosophy fails to account for this restless fever of the faculties, and therefore it must be something superhuman that inflicts the pangs I feel;” he paused a minute or two as if revolving the question over silently, and then proceeded, “and yet it may arise from the mere imperfection of human frailty, labouring under alarm lest the deed should come to be known and the law claim the fulfilment of an expiatory sacrifice. It must be so—but escaping this—ha, ha, ha!—I have title, wealth, beauty, power, every luxury that riches can purchase, or pleasure

bestow—and when I quit this world ——” Again he shuddered—“aye, but there’s the rub ; millions have died full of hope, believing in an hereafter of bliss, and joy, and happiness unspeakable—ages have rolled on, and that which is called the Sacred Volume has been the guide and support of the just and good, whilst the theory I have made the groundwork of my practice has only recently had its birth.—I’m sick of doubt—it mars all peace, and murders rest ;—murder !” muttered he, as he thrust his long white fingers amongst his black and glossy locks, and pressed the palm of his hand upon his forehead, “aye, murder, most foul and most unnatural.” Once more his voice assumed a tone of plaintive harmony as he murmured, “father, father !” Then starting, as if stung with mortal agony, his harsh discordant utterings rang wildly through the room. “Aye, I would call on him—my father, and I would plead with him for forgiveness—I—I—” and an hysteric laugh shook his every limb.

“I am glad to find you in such a pleasant mood,” exclaimed Beatrice, as she entered the room, and closed the door behind her ; “this is as it should be, and renders me proud that my arguments have not failed to produce the desired effect.”

“Oh, Beatrice—Beatrice,” uttered the dwarf, the music of his voice flowing in rich harmony, as he gazed upon her matchless loveliness; “oh, Beatrice, did you but know what was struggling within, you would not call mine a pleasant mood. Does the old man yet exist?”

“The pulses of existence still strive against the destroyer,” answered she with firmness; “but you must well know which will shortly be the conqueror.”

“He is my father, Beatrice,” urged the dwarf, in tones of supplication, as he gently took her hand between his own and fixed his fascinating eyes upon her countenance; “he never denied us anything—”

“This craven folly must terminate in ruin to yourself, to me, and to your boy,” returned the lady, withdrawing her hand. “The old man dies full of years, and you succeed him. Hitherto we have been pent up and immured within this dreary solitude to gratify his caprice, and think you I would have submitted to all this but for the prospect of freedom that stood out boldly before me? No, Sir, my proper station in society is the world of fashion and of pleasure”—the dwarf writhed. “Your wealth must provide me a palace, your title

will obtain for me a presentation at court, and as Lady O'Connor in the full splendour of royal favour, your wife will do every justice to your ancient family."

A thousand confused visions instantaneously conjured up by suspicion and jealousy came like demons to torture the sensibility of the dwarf, and he convulsively gasped for breath. A heavy groan burst forth as he exclaimed, "I have perpetrated this deed, then, to drag down misery on myself; oh, Beatrice, Beatrice, whither will you lead me further!"

"How ready is a cowardly spirit to remove the weight of its own crime on to the shoulders of another," responded the lady, scornfully; "was it merely from my suggestions that your actions have sprung? Of course you had no ambitious motive—no longing desires of your own to gratify. The current of your passions has run smoothly on, undisturbed by vengeful feelings—unmingled with—"

"Forbear, Beatrice, forbear," uttered the dwarf discordantly; "do not, by your taunts, urge me to desperation. I cannot—nay, by Heaven, I will not bear it—my brain is even now on fire——"

"It is time you cooled it then," said the lady,

calmly; "the last hour of the old man is approaching, and surely, like a dutiful and affectionate son, you would not be absent from his side at such a trying moment."

"Devil," harshly muttered the dwarf, as he resumed his rapid motions to and fro. "No—no, I will not witness his dying agonies. There is already a hell in my heart, and the sight of him would but make it rage more fiercely."

"I can but regret your determination," said Beatrice, mildly; "I fancied that I might claim some reliance on your boasted admiration of these poor personal endowments, and the affection you have said you cherished for our boy—but I find I am mistaken, and both myself and my remaining child must yield to——"

"No! no! Beatrice, no;" exclaimed the dwarf, quickly interrupting her. "I have gone too far to retract, though scorn, and contumely, and taunts, from the source we look to for tenderness and love, may well madden a more even temper than mine; and how have I deserved your hate? For you, I sacrificed my elder brother, and sent him to perish by disease, or murder, on a foreign shore.—For you, I silenced his child for ever, and the retribu-

tive hand of unerring Justice has deprived me of my own fair beautiful darling.—For you, my father—”

“Enough, enough,” said Beatrice; “the catalogue has been too often read over for me to forget a single item, and now this last may be added to the list. But what have you in prospect, Sir Cornelius?” The dwarf’s face showed a bitter smile of irony.—“What have you not in prospect? I can see a present baronetcy, with an earldom in the distance. I can see rank and riches—honours and power—your voice may guide and govern the senate—your word and opinion take precedence in the councils of your sovereign, and rule the state: and think you I shall be wanting in my part of the contract? No, no, sir, your honour shall be safe in my keeping; your advancement and interest shall be my study; and when I see princes and peers courting even your smiles, my very soul shall exult in it, as the contrivance of my own head—the work of my own hands; but prithee, talk to me no more of love.”

When the lady first commenced her description of the future, the dwarf stopped and fixed his keen gaze upon her; as she proceeded with greater ani-

mation, he seemed to drink in her voice with irrepressible ecstasy ; the vivid picture was present to his heated imagination ; he saw coronets and mitres bending before him ; he fancied himself elevated to a pinnacle his ambition had never contemplated soaring to ; he advanced to the beautiful woman, and again taking her by the hand, he uttered, " Beatrice, do with me as you will."

" Nerve yourself, then, and come with me to the bed-side of your dying father ;" commanded she, without allowing a moment to intervene, lest his mental courage should again fail. " The old man is sinking fast, he has been asking for you, come !"

My readers will call to mind the room in which Sir Terence O'Connor was seated with old Bridget, on the day of Miss O'Toole's wedding, as described in the first volume, when he was bemoaning the abduction or death of his eldest child. But there were other circumstances to embitter the passing moment. Mrs. O'Connor, from the time she had beheld the blow given to her husband in the *mêlée*, before the Holy well, had never felt like the same individual ; and when, at her accouchement, she beheld the deformed little being she had brought into the world, the spectacle hastened her depar-

ture from it—that being was none other than Cornelius, the dwarf. And now in the self-same room, extended on a canopied couch, laid Sir Terence, his eyes glazed and dim, and the hue of approaching dissolution on his cheek. Crouched in one corner of the apartment was old Bridget, rocking to and fro, her head bare, and a few straggling white silvery hairs hanging down her wrinkled brow, over which eighty years had passed, and left their deep traced furrows.

The baronet appeared to be suffering severely from internal agony. “I am burnt up,” he cried out, “my entrails are scorched, and no one attempts to give me relief. Where—where is my son?”

“I am here, father—here for the first time in your presence—the son you lost in infancy—Terence Hamilton O’Connor now craves your paternal benediction,” and the man known as Murtoch Delaney knelt by the side of the dying baronet.

Sir Terence gazed upon the intruder, but his sight was too dull and exhausted, and the twilight hour was on, so that he could not trace his features. In an instant, however, Bridget rushed forward and grasped his arm, looked in his face, and uttered “Cross o’Christ, but ’tis indeed himself—flesh and

blood;" and she felt his sinewy limbs. "Oh! then, masther, he is indeed your son—the child ye've mourned—sthole from yez by yer owld inimy the Delaney—and brought up on the mounthains—shure an its yer blessing upon him ye'll be giving, and he fornent ye axing it."

"What means all this?" exclaimed the baronet in hurried accents, "am I now to be made the subject of imposition; oh! for something to cool this burning heat."

"Oh! that I could relieve you, father," said the still kneeling man, with sympathizing earnestness; "it is dreadful to be compelled to steal like a thief to your presence, and to find you thus;—my eyes have never to my recollection seen you before—I have no remembrance of your voice, but still I am your son—the child of Catherine Macgennis, who as Bridget has said truly was stolen by the connivance of Delaney, and brought up as his own offspring; speak again Bridget, is not this the fact. Oh! by my sainted mother now at rest, utter nothing but the truth; am not I his son—his eldest son?"

"Deed an deed, an its God's thruth, Sir Terence," exclaimed the aged woman; "the course of time will not allow you to hear the tale, but this

is yer first-born ! Have I iver deceived you ? An now do ye think I'd do it within the blessed priseness when the howly angels are waiting to carry you away ?" and she devoutly crossed herself.

"Some cold—cold water, Bridget," demanded the baronet; it was given to him, and he swallowed copiously of the liquid; "what you tell me is indeed wonderful—it is incredible. Why have years been suffered to fly away without bringing it to my knowledge before ? Oh ! this burning agony is dreadful—the coldest spring would boil with scalding heat within me ; I cannot, I dare not acknowledge you—it might be detrimental to the claims of Cornelius, who has ever been a dutiful son. You have adduced no proof ; I cannot in justice acknowledge you."

"Your blessing, father—your blessing is all I seek," entreated the supposed Murtoch, greatly agitated ; "only lay your hands upon my head, and say with fervour, 'God bless you !' A stranger might receive that without prejudice to any one, whilst to me it would be the benediction of a parent."

"The mark, Sir Terence—the mark," hastily exclaimed Bridget, "an ye'll remember the mark upon the breast—the sprig of mulberries, with three on a

stalk ; open your vest ma vourneen and show them quickly. Oh ! its yerself is the blood of the thrue O'Connors."

The man did as he was bid, but the gloom was too dense for anything to be distinctly seen, and the baronet, after vainly endeavouring to trace something on the breast of his suppliant, fell back upon his couch writhing with agony ; " Oh ! the pain is on me again.—Why is Cornelius absent at such a time as this," said he ; " go stranger—go—you will offend him if he finds you here."

" Will you not then say even ' God bless you,' " asked Murtoch, his voice thick and husky ; " you command me from you—me, your rightful son and heir, and you deny me one blessing. But I know the miscreant who has done this, and I will not quit the place—it is my paternal home, and he it was who sent me a convict across the wide waters."

" A convict?" feebly uttered Sir Terence, a small portion of his energies reviving at the hated name ; " a convict," he repeated, " how dare you intrude yourself into my presence, sirrah ;—oh ! that convulsive pang—it racks my very vitals—no human strength can endure this long. Ring the bell, Bridget, and send for Cornelius here."

“Howly mother forgive me if I’m wrong,” said the aged woman, “but I cannot do it—I dare not do it, Sir Terence; its dead I thought he was, and saw no use in ripping up ould grievances, but here he is to the fore—himself—alive, an yer first-born, Sir Terence,—may the sowl of me niver escape from purgatory but its thrue. A convict was he? An who made him that same? Them as you wants here at this blessed moment. Is it murdther that I’d see done, and yer eyes to close for iver on one brother taking the life of another, and them both your own childther. Och! hone, Sir Terence, the day is closing wid yer in this life, may the glory of the saints shine upon yer in the next: he that refuses to bless shall niver obtain a blessing.”

The baronet, wrought upon by this exhortation, extended his trembling hands, and they had just been rested on the head of the kneeling suppliant, when Beatrice, followed by Cornelius, entered the room. There was still a sufficiency of light to discern what was passing, though not enough to distinguish every minutiae that occurred. But at this moment the departing rays of the sun, as if to shed approval on the last act of the baronet—imparted a richer and a brighter glow to every object;—the

ruddy gleam fell full upon the face of the kneeling man, and showed every feature plainly to the dwarf and his wife. The former instantly recognized them, and drawing himself into a crouching attitude, he muttered, "The unhallowed grave has yielded up its dead—it is there before me, and stealing that benediction which would have been his due had he lived. Oh! Beatrice—Beatrice, force him away—drive the spectre hence, it withers up my sight;" and he spread his hands so as to conceal his face.

The lady was astonished at what she witnessed, for she was totally unacquainted with the person or countenance of the kneeling man. Solemn assurances had been given by the captain of the convict ship, that Delaney was amongst the number of those who had been landed on the island of Ferro; and subsequent intelligence gave precise information of the horrible massacre that had ensued. Yet the allusions of her husband excited a strong feeling of apprehension, that the undoubted son and heir of Sir Terence was before her, and both distinctly heard the blessing uttered by the dying man.

"Its not dead he is!" shouted Bridget; "an

now the scorn of the scorner will rebound upon themselves—why ! musha Misther Cornalius, an its yer eldther brother is here forenent yez.”

“It is no spirit then,” muttered the dwarf to himself, “and I can breathe again.” He advanced to the bed-side—“What elder brother, ye omad-houm,” said he, angrily ; “and who are you who thus presume to invade the sanctity of the dying hour ?”

“Answer the question yourself, Cornelius,” replied the other, rising up ; “you know me well ; attest it here before our venerable parent, and let the act of solemn justice smooth his passage to eternity.”

“Vile impostor — never !” almost shrieked the dwarf, as he sprang forward and grappled with the individual who had addressed him ; “how you came here in violation of the laws of your country, I have yet to learn, but do not think you shall escape the sentence of a judge whose only fault was an excess of leniency.”

“Forbear, Cornelius, forbear to urge this strife in the presence of our failing parent,” exclaimed the other, whose bodily powers were no adequate match for the gigantic strength of his antagonist ;

“think you that taking my life,” for Cornelius was striving to get grip-hold of his throat, “will destroy the evidence, in your own mind, of who I really am? Forbear, I say—your elder brother commands it—do not madden me. Nay, then, if I must, I must.” He pulled a pistol from his breast, and presented it at the dwarf’s head, who immediately relaxed his hold, and shrunk away. But it was only momentary, for the next instant his hand also held an instrument of death, and the brothers stood each at the extremity of the couch, on which laid an expiring parent, with their weapons pointed to take away life.

But Beatrice came between, and in accents of soothing cunning allayed the strife. The pistols were put up, but the gleams of deadly vengeance still shot from the full large eyes of the dwarf, and a casual observer might have seen that he only waited for a fairer opportunity to renew the contest. Nor was it long wanting.

“You will quit this room then,” said Cornelius to his brother; “your presence must be anything but grateful to Sir Terence.”

“He is my father, Cornelius,” returned the other; “and I dare you to disprove it. True;

your machinations have prevented the fact coming to his knowledge long since. But here is Bridget, who has already testified it before him and you."

"Bridget!" said the dwarf, with a convulsive respiration as he turned to the old woman, who had resumed her seat in the corner; "and what can that old hag know of the matter?"

"Every thing that your own conscience is now telling you," responded the other, firmly; "speak, Bridget, repeat what you have already said to Sir Terence; am I not that son Terence Hamilton O'Connor, who was carried away in infancy, and reared by Delaney as his own?"

But the old woman continued rocking herself to and fro, and was silent. The inquirer was about to renew his question, when the groans of the dying sufferer averted his attention, and he turned towards the couch.

"These pangs are excruciating," shrieked Sir Terence, "oh, I am torn to pieces—this cannot be the mere effects of expiring nature. Bridget, what have you done? Cornelius! Beatrice! O God, the suspicion is worse agony than the racking pains I suffer;" he raised himself erect, looked earnestly in the face of Murtoch and exclaimed, "yes, yes,

I feel it all ! I know it now ! it is poison ! poison ! nothing but poison could torture me thus !" and he sank back exhausted.

For nearly a minute the most intense silence prevailed through the apartment. Murtoch fixed his steady gaze upon the countenance of the dwarf, and the livid hue which pervaded it was even more ghastly than that on the cheeks of the dying man. Beatrice alone remained unmoved, nor was there the least change in her beautiful features as she calmly whispered, " His sufferings have shook his reason ; go to him, Cornelius, raise him up."

But the request of the lady had been anticipated by Murtoch, who was standing near the head of Sir Terence ; he took the baronet's hand, and placing his arm beneath his back, gently elevated him from the uneasy posture in which he had fallen. " Father," said he, in a deep and solemn voice, " has there then been murderous cruelty at work here also ? Oh, Cornelius, Cornelius ! if this be true, how will you dare to meet your God ?—my wife—my little ones too—where are they ?" and his whole frame shook with agitation.

" Liar—villain—impostor !" shrieked the dwarf, as unmindful of the state of his parent, he sprang

once more upon the man who claimed fraternity, and gripped him by the throat. Murtoch loosed his arm from beneath Sir Terence, but the latter observing the renewal of the strife, rallied the last energies of existence, and in struggling to separate them, all three came rolling to the floor. The dwarf would not quit his hold; he still clutched the throat of his victim—his long sinewy fingers were compressed with iron tenacity, but suddenly they relaxed—he had looked upon the face of his father, who laid stretched at his side, and saw that he was a corpse.

The noise brought in several of the servants, and at the command of Beatrice, (for Cornelius was rendered incapable by mental imbecility), Murtoch was seized and conveyed to the strong room in which Feaghan had been confined. Here, in the very house to which he laid claim, as heir to the deceased Sir Terence, did the unhappy man remain a close prisoner, revolving in his mind the circumstances that had occurred, and mourning over his unhappy destiny, which without any fault of his own, deprived him of rank, and wealth, and home, and wife, and children.

It was about the hour of midnight, and the door

of the prison-room swung back upon its hinges, and Cornelius entered the place, leaving a guard outside. The lamp he held in his hand shewed his pale and haggard features, as he turned towards the captive, and the brothers stood sternly looking on each other. Murtoch was apprehensive that the dwarf had come to take his life, and he keenly watched his every movement, determined to defend himself to the last.

“Hear me, Delaney,” said the dwarf in a soft and musical voice; “I wish you no evil, but would promote your good, unless your own folly prevent it. Acknowledge the imposition you would have practised on the late Sir Terence; admit that you have no claim to his paternity; deny your alliance to the O’Connors, either by birth or blood, and you shall not only be free, but I will solicit your pardon from the crown—I will restore you to the farm which the laws confiscated, and I trust you will become an honourable and useful member of society.”

“I have patiently listened to you,” returned the other, proudly; “as unhappily I have no alternative—but can you form so mean an opinion of my experience in the world, as to suppose I am to be

deceived by the proffered friendship of one whose enmity has been so deadly? My verbal declarations, unless in the presence of witnesses would avail you nothing—”

“The witnesses are waiting outside,” hurriedly exclaimed the dwarf, “the documents are ready prepared and only require your signature in their presence—do not then throw away the certainty of liberty—do not again expose yourself to banishment from your native land.”

“And where are my wife and children?” said Murtoch, in a tone of mournful inquiry; “they are dead—ay murdered!”

“By whom—who has perpetrated so vile a deed?” hurriedly exclaimed Cornelius, his features convulsed as conscience reminded him of the occurrence in the cave. “They are perhaps yet living, and may be restored to you. Have you any certain information of their death?”

Murtoch eyed his brother with piercing keenness as he replied, “Those who were the cause of their perishing need put no such questions to me.”

“Do you allude to me?—what, fix the charge on me?” inquired the dwarf, in his harsh, discordant tones, as his lips quivered, so as to render it

doubtful whether he was actuated by rage or fear ;
“ but no matter—I defy you, and if you will not profit by my generosity, I must leave you to your fate. You have already had some experience of the comforts of a convict ship, and if you obstinately persist in making me your enemy—a further taste of the enjoyments in a penal settlement, and at a greater distance from this country, rests entirely in your own hands. Sign the documents I shall produce, and liberty is yours—refuse, and you quit Ireland by the first ship that sails.”

“ Cornelius !” said the other after a short pause, “ I allow that you have me in a cleft-stick, for I am here your prisoner, and guarded by your own creatures, whilst experience has too fatally shown me the influence of power over justice ;” he paused a short time, as deep agitation shook his frame, and then resumed, “ My wife and little ones are, I fear, no more—what then would be the value of titles and wealth to me, if subsistence is all that I require, and that might be gained by the labour of my hands. You say you will procure for me liberty and the restoration to my farm—do I understand you right ?”

“ You do, correctly so !” responded the dwarf

with eagerness, as if anticipating a favourable result to his requests. "Of your family I know nothing, but freedom will afford you an opportunity of searching for them, and if a thousand pounds are wanting to promote your prosperity, the money shall be your's."

A scowl of contempt and indignation passed over the features of the prisoner; but the demonstration vanished in a moment, and was unnoticed by the dwarf; "And you would guarantee the freedom of an impostor, with the gift of a thousand pounds?" in a tone, half-banter, half-earnest; "no one can doubt your generosity after that, at all events."

"What I have promised, that will I perform—take it in which way you will," returned the dwarf, in his harsh accents.

"You can have no motive to bribe an impostor," exclaimed the prisoner sternly; "nor would you offer what you do, but that in your heart, and in your conscience, you really believe me to be your brother—your elder brother. You have had opportunities of ascertaining the fact; for I will not believe a restless mind like yours would or could remain satisfied, without a rigid investigation—and the result is—"

“That you are here,” responded the dwarf, with vehemence. “Is this a proof that I consider the claims of kindred are just?”

“Yes,” responded the other with equal energy, “the strongest evidence of your convictions—it was you, Cornelius, who suborned witnesses to procure an unjust and cruel sentence—it was you who cut off all communication with that parent who now lies dead ; and what has accelerated his departure, you, yourself, best know—it was you who struggled with me in his last moments to prevent my receiving that benediction which he gave—it is you, Cornelius, who now offer me liberty, and a thousand pounds, to sign certain documents, yielding up my birth-right, and denying alliance with the O’Connors. Is this the usual deportment of a great and wealthy man, who feels himself secure ? Is this the conduct manifested by the honest and the honourable towards an impostor ?”

The dwarf paced the stone cell, with rapid strides, till the prisoner had ceased speaking ; he then stopped full before him, and, whilst every muscle of his countenance betrayed a troubled mind, he answered, “And if I believe in our relationship, what then ?”

"You *do* believe it, Cornelius," returned the other with energy; "but the demon of avarice has steeled your heart, and I feel how vain it would be to plead with you on any other grounds than those you have named; still there is a powerful feeling in my breast that I cannot conquer or control. Speak, Cornelius—tell me—for on your reply, my future destiny must be based—tell me, are we brothers, or are we not."

There was a solemn earnestness in the manner of putting the question, that staggered the person addressed. The dwarf fixed his large full eyes upon the prisoner, and the sudden and quick contraction, and elevation of his brow, gave ample evidence of the struggles in his mind. "And what avails the tie of kindred," asked he, determinedly, "my purpose is unalterably fixed."

"I know it," responded the other, passionately, "I am well aware of it—yet, Cornelius, I must have the truth from your own lips."

"What need of more than I have already said," hastily inquired the dwarf; "if I believe you are my brother, shall I not endeavour to promote your welfare?"

"But on condition—on condition," responded

the other, catching at everything he could, to make his aim more sure.

“Well be it so—on certain conditions,” assented the dwarf, more placidly; “I have wealth unbounded—my influence and interests are great.”

“Enough—enough of that,” convulsively exclaimed the prisoner; “I must have your candid acknowledgment—am I your elder brother or not?—a single monosyllable may decide it—are we the sons of the same father?”

The dwarf gazed earnestly upon his captive for more than a minute—he beheld a fixed and determined look bent upon him—he saw that denial was useless, and he slowly articulated “We are.”

“And I the eldest of the two?” calmly asked the prisoner; “the thought will soothe me in retirement—you allow that I am the first-born of our parents.”

“I do,” responded the dwarf, sanguine that his expectations were now about to be realized, yet clothing his assertion in as few words as possible.

An expressive smile of gratified delight played round the mouth of the prisoner at this announcement. “I then,” said he, “am now Sir Terence Hamilton O’Connor;” the dwarf looked alarmed

and displeased, "and," continued the speaker, "you require me to barter my title and estates, for—"

"Freedom—security—prosperity," answered the dwarf, hastily interrupting him; "a life of comfort and of ease, instead of a life of banishment and pain—and, mark what I say—you have no living evidence to support your claims;" the prisoner eyed him with doubt, "aye, you would remind me of Bridget—henceforth the old crone is dumb, and no power on earth will get her to utter a word on the subject."

"Where then is Maurice Feaghan," enquired the other.

"Dead," returned the dwarf, with seeming ecstasy.

"And Tim Donovan, and Casey, who carried me off when an infant, and appeared against me on my trial," continued the prisoner.

"Dead—dead," triumphantly responded the dwarf, "I saw their lifeless bodies myself, at the bottom of the Devil's Cove—fit place for such infernal rascals."

"But there is Mike Hagan, and others, for though the secret was well kept, yet, there were many acquainted with the fact," said the captive.

"I firmly believe that there are none now

living, or that dare show themselves," exclaimed the dwarf.

"Well—well, let it rest," said the elder brother, "we have no time to dispute such matters now—you solemnly admit that you believe the bond of our fraternity exists, and that I am the senior of the two—is it not so?"

"I have already said it," replied the dwarf, doggedly; "and what can you make of the avowal—of what advantage will it be to you, if you resist my wishes. You have been sentenced by the laws to transportation for life, and here you are,—no matter how—apprehended at large—a returned convict—and may be sent off again, at a very short notice. What document, or what evidence have you, to support your claim?"

"And will not fraternal regard quicken a better feeling in your breast, Cornelius?" said the prisoner, in a tone of affectionate expostulation. "Would you utterly destroy the rights of brotherhood? Have I no hope?"

The dwarf scowled fearfully upon his companion as he answered, "It is you who would destroy the rights of brotherhood, not I. Have you ever in your early years been taught to look up to the period when rank and riches were to be your own?"

Were you accustomed to unbounded splendour and costly luxury? Have you from infancy been used to gaze with expectation on this noble building, that it must one day become your own? Have you experienced the pomp and state which wealth and magnificence bestow—the ready service of a half hundred menials, watching your beck and nod? Has your mind dwelt upon the future with proud ambition to climb to higher power? No, no, you know nothing of these things with which I have been familiar, from the first opening of reason; and do you think I will resign them, because you have sprung up like an adder in my path?” he laughed hysterically, “it is doting folly to expect it. I must have all or none, and now the former is in my grasp,” he extended his arm, and clutched his long white fingers together, “do you imagine I will throw it away?” and he suited the action to the word.

“But whatever may take place—the adder as you pleasantly style me, will still remain,” remonstrated the elder brother.

“It’s fangs drawn and it will be harmless,” uttered the dwarf with quickness. “I tender you my friendship, as soon as that is accomplished—if you resolve to make me your enemy, the conse-

quences must and will rest upon your own head, not on mine—choose your course.”

The prisoner was silent a few minutes as if debating the question with himself; at length he seemed to have formed his resolution, “Call in your witnesses,” said he, “and let me see the documents.”

“You must read the papers and subscribe to their declaration in the presence of those who will have to attest them,” uttered the dwarf; “I need hardly tell you, the act must be voluntary on your part. But it must not be done here. You shall accompany me to the hall, and there, in the presence of the household.”

“Ha—a—a!” uttered the prisoner as he convulsively drew his breath, and every feature betrayed strong emotion, “you would make assurance doubly sure—but agreed—agreed—I am ready and impatient till it is done—come, then, let us proceed according to your own desire—come!”

The dwarf unhesitatingly threw open the door, where no less than four attendants well armed were waiting with lights; an indication from their master, and two preceded and two followed the prisoner, as they proceeded to the great hall, which

has already been described as the place where Feaghan was first introduced to Captain Lilyburn. Notwithstanding that death was in the house, the spacious hall was lighted up; the domestics were ranged on each side; the large portals were guarded by an armed force; the dark oak table had been placed in the centre, and at it sat two or three gentlemen in black, whilst a vacant arm-chair elevated above the rest, and with an ebony desk before it, occupied the extreme end; the whole having the appearance (except the splendour) of the baronial times, when the strong hand prevailed, and held a criminal court of its own.

Cornelius took the arm-chair, and the prisoner was placed standing in juxtaposition with him at the bottom of the table, his guards remaining a short distance in his rear. The most profound silence prevailed; the documents were handed to the captive, who read them over, and as his eye ran from line to line, the flush of indignation deepened on his cheeks. At the close, a pen was handed to him, and as he stood firmly erect holding the papers in one hand and the pen in the other, so silent was every thing around, that it seemed as if even breathing had been suspended.

At length the dwarf rose up, and looking proudly around him, said in his most harmonious accents: "My friends and dependants, I have summoned you together for the purpose of announcing the decease of my lamented father," and the wretch affected to weep, whilst the prisoner looked at him with a contemptuous disdain wholly unsuited to the character he was expected to perform; "I say," continued he, "that one object of your attendance was to hear of the loss we have all sustained; but there is also another, and to me, a more important, communication I have to make. You all, or most of you know, that the first-born of my mother was surreptitiously carried off in early infancy; this has afforded an opportunity for impostors and pretenders to lay claim to the heritage; but there is every reason to believe, that the brother whom I should have honoured and cherished was basely murdered, and I am now the only survivor—"

"It is false!" shouted the prisoner in a voice that rolled like thunder round the vaulted roof, and making a sudden spring, he was instantly on the table. "That son, the eldest son of Sir Ter-

ence O'Connor, is now before you, and I am he ; these documents—”

A loud shriek rang through the hall as the beautiful Beatrice rushed forward from a place of concealment, where she had overheard what had passed, and now vehemently ordered the guards to seize upon the claimant, lest he should again attempt her husband's life. But the elder brother was not to be thus silenced. Again he raised his voice, “ I am *master* here ; the son and heir of Sir Terence, whose name I bear, and thus I sign the miserable attempt to defraud me of my rights.” He rent the papers into shreds and scattered them about.

“ Seize the convicted villain ; the returned felon ;” exclaimed the dwarf in a voice of rage, whilst foaming at the mouth. “ He has broken the laws, and I was again about to deliver him up to justice.”

“ Ha-a-a !” vociferated the elder brother, “ I guessed your purpose, monster, and forestalled it. Men, I am your master now ; I, Sir Terence Hamilton O'Connor, and I command your obedience.”

But he spoke to those who knew nothing of him,

or the justice of his claims ; they had been too much accustomed to consider the dwarf as their future head, to suffer the words of a stranger to have any weight with them, and they closed round the table ready to fire, in case of further resistance.

“ Drag the impostor down,” shrieked Beatrice ; “ who is there that fears one man ; stand back, ye cowards, and let a woman set you an example of fidelity to her lord,” and seizing a pistol, she discharged it at the prisoner, who must have fallen, had he not grasped the muzzle and averted it on the instant, the ball just grazing his head. But in stooping he exposed himself to his enemies ; they seized him by the collar, and he was dragged down, pinioned, and conveyed to his former place of confinement, where he was soon afterwards followed by the dwarf.

“ You have sealed your own fate,” said the misshapen being in his harsh discordant enunciation. “ A ship is now ready to quit Cork, and you will be removed some few thousand miles further off than you was before. You rejected my proffered friendship—”

“ Friendship !” shouted the infuriated man ; “ wretch, unworthy the name of human being, much

more that of Christian ; had I signed those abdications of my right, my fate would still have been the same ; perhaps worse. A monster like you can have no sense of justice, no bowels of compassion ; think you I was deceived by your plausible persuasion ; no ! I saw through the flimsy covering of your heart—”

“ Cease this idle and unavailing rage,” returned the dwarf, interrupting him. “ You have forced me to do what I have, but I can yet save you, and will impose no condition till you are free.” A gleam of hope irradiated the countenance of the wretched prisoner, but it was only for a moment ; still it was not lost upon the dwarf, who had watched him with the most intense keenness, and having taken a pistol from his pocket, he put the lock upon the full-cock, and then exposed the secret way through which he had conducted Feaghan. “ This leads to liberty,” said he in an under tone, and instantly closed the aperture. “ I am yet prepared to become your friend. You can neither defeat my claim, nor injure my reputation. I have nothing to apprehend from your most strenuous exertions. Come, then,” and he once more unclosed the aperture, “ follow me to life and freedom.”

“To death and the grave,” responded the other with so deep a pathos, that the dwarf shuddered, for the intimation was correct, an ambush having been prepared to despatch him, should he accept the offer. “No, Cornelius; I trust you no further, the deformity of your heart is as much exposed to my view, as the deformity of your person—”

“Peace, scoffer,” exclaimed the dwarf, with gnashing teeth, as he struck his pinioned and defenceless victim. “The affliction is not of my own seeking.”

“Your hand will one day be a curse to its owner for that blow,” said the captive reproachfully. “There is a God of retribution; and the sanguinary monster that could murder a parent, and rob a brother of his heritage, will not go unpunished. Your own daughter—”

“Ha!—what of her?” eagerly inquired the dwarf; “she was the delight of my eyes; the darling of my heart; tell me, does she still live; can I recover her?” He covered his haggard face with his white hands, as he uttered, “the blow I gave you in my hate is already avenged! You know where she is, and will not tell me.”

“Will you forego your cruel purpose, and

acknowledge me as the heir to our dead father's title and estates?" asked the prisoner.

"Never!—never!" vociferated the deformed, ambition and avarice at once driving every feeling of tenderness from his breast: "what you have said induces a hope that she still lives, and therefore I will not despair of recovering her without your aid. I have proffered you friendship and freedom; you have refused both; and yet, the child was exceedingly precious in my sight—"

"You relent, then," eagerly exclaimed the prisoner, "she may one day suffer for her father's guilt."

"I cannot avert it," returned the dwarf mournfully; "my purpose is unchanged, whatever your revealings may be." He paused a minute, and again covered his face. "Yet, no!" continued he, "she must not perish; tell me where she is—and—"

"The destiny you have prepared for me will remain the same," interrupted the elder brother. "No, no, Cornelius; you have no bowels of compassion, not even for your own offspring; and your boy may follow the example of his father, and think you tedious in wearing away existence—poison—"

“ Ha-a ! ” shrieked the dwarf, the fearful picture flashing at once upon his vivid imagination, that what he himself had done might hereafter become his own punishment ; but it immediately vanished again, though it left a tremor on his limbs ; he clapped his hands together ; the attendants entered ; the prisoner was commanded to follow them, and they guarded him to a close carriage, to which four horses were attached ; they drove off, and the heir to the title and estates of the O’Connors was hurried off to Cork, as a convicted transport found at large, without licence, before his term had expired.

CHAPTER IX.

How beautiful she glides along parting the azure seas,
Her white sails glist'ning in the sun, and swell'd out by the
breeze,
Oh ! who would look upon that ship, and think she bore
within
A load of guilt and sorrow—a living freight of sin ?

DURING the journey, Murtoch Delaney (for by that name we shall still continue to call him) vainly endeavoured to draw his only travelling companion into conversation : but the man remained doggedly silent, and either was or pretended to be so deaf that he could not hear what was said to him. He could perceive that horsemen were guarding the vehicle, not one of whom approached to speak to him ; and whilst the horses were changing no one was permitted to approach the spot. This was something unexpected by the prisoner ; but the whole was explained when, on alighting at the gaol in Cork, he caught a glimpse of his arch enemy and younger brother enveloped in a horseman's cloak.

Murtoch had hoped that some time would elapse before the period for departure, so that he might make his case known. He knew that by the laws of England death was the punishment for returning from transportation, yet his return was not altogether voluntary; and, if the circumstances could be properly represented, there was a possibility of his obtaining a favourable consideration. He also knew that in England a trial must precede condemnation; but in Ireland he was fully sensible that justice was more outraged by the administrators of the law than by the poor unhappy beings who suffered the infliction of its penalties.

And such was actually the case in this instance, for Delaney was conveyed before some judicial functionary; an order was given for his reception on board a convict ship that was then getting under way, bound across the wide waters to that receptacle for condemned vice, immorality, and debauchery—then recently established—Botany Bay. The principal portion of her living freight was females, but there was also some few male prisoners, who had been convicted of treasonable practices, and were sent out of the country for various terms of transportation.

The decks were crowded, and soon the distended sails bore the ship rapidly along the land, and weeping eyes were dimly gazing on the green hills of Erin that were never to behold them again. Within the small compass of that floating ship every guilty passion and propensity that could debase human nature were concentrated, whilst among a certain portion of the vilest, the feelings were more allied to the demoniac principles of hell than to anything connected with civilized life.

Several of the females were young, and by no means deficient in personal beauty, and, perhaps, had their histories been traced, it would probably have been found that their first step in defalcation from virtue might be attributed to the base seduction of men, who, to gratify their own libidinous appetites, decoyed them into sin, and then left them to perish. Oh ! when the unhappy creatures looked back to the days of childhood and innocence, and contrasted those peaceful and joyous hours with the present period, as, cast off by home, by friends, and by country, the wretched convict bade farewell to every social tie that could sweeten the cup of life, and saw the land of her nativity fading to the view, if any sense of huma-

nity still remained—if the heart was not rendered impenetrably callous—if the mind was not degraded into the very lowest depths of depravity—the anguish of that moment must have been horrible indeed. But there were also other circumstances connected with their doom that were calculated to fill the spirit with terrible forebodings. The past did not occupy the whole of their thoughts—the unknown but dreaded future shadowing forth a never-ceasing punishment, and the shrinking mind in the prostration of its strength conjured up a thousand horrid shapes to torture itself withal.

But away bounded the noble ship over the sparkling waters—the sun shining with resplendent brightness on her white sails as she ran off from the land till the old head of Kinsale sank lower and lower, and at length nothing appeared but the hummock, which remained the only blue spot that broke the curve of the horizon. Every eye was strained towards it—every heart clung to that lone speck—it was all that was left to them of their native shores; and, when it disappeared, the link was severed—the bond was broken—they felt the reality of their situation—upon the wide ocean of

storms and tempests, bound to the regions where worse than slavery awaited them.

And yet, there were not wanting those who either affected an indifference to their situation, or were really insensible to the web of wretchedness that was weaving its meshes around them ; and they carried their infernal principle so far as to ridicule the almost heart-broken creatures, who, having lost sight of the last connecting union with the theatre of infantile and youthful enjoyment, were now recording in memory scenes and events, pleasures and affections, persons and places, which were rendered more precious to the remembrance as the certainty of an eternal separation from them rushed with terrible conviction through the heart.

Seated on the stern of the long-boat, with his open palm pressed against his burning forehead, was the man of many sorrows, and his earnest gaze was still directed towards the quarter where the last spot of land had been seen.

“ An why will ye sit there, Murtoch Delaney ? ” inquired an old crone, who had been transported as an incorrigible pickpocket ; “ why will ye sit there, and tear the bootiful eyes out of you looking at nothing avich ? Och ! then, an what’s the use

o' grieving? An there's Shamus, too, making a great gal of himself, instead of spaking comfort to the childer ——"

The person mentioned as Shamus stood leaning over the side, and swaying himself about in evident agitation as the big tears rolled heavily down his face. He had been tried for White-boyism, and conviction having followed, as a matter of course, he had been sentenced to transporation for life. "An where is my hearth-stone now, ye scorner?" said he in answer to the woman who had addressed him, "an where's the kind cratur that niver denied me nothing that I wished for?—an where are my boys that wur my heart's pride?—the darlings! The branches are lopped off from the ould trunk—the sun will shine upon the bit home, but I shall not be there to feel its warmth—the mother will weep for the father of her childer, and who is left to dthry the sthrame from her eyes?—och hone!"

"Shure an she'll get another man, Shamus, jewel!" said the spiteful wretch tauntingly; "you're broke in twain for iver, and Paddy will share the pratees with the gossoons."

The man's eyes seemed to flash fire as, raising himself from his leaning posture, he confronted

the beldame, "Out upon ye, you ould divel's nurse!" said he wrathfully; "ounly you'd disgrace my arem, I'd knock you into smithereens! Who can spake a misbegotten word of Katey?"

"An a dacent husband have you been to her, Shamus," persevered the tormenting hag; "oh! don't desave yourself, I knows your history from them as remembers what they never forgets."

"Hannimadhiou!" ejaculated Shamus, as he lifted his arm to strike; but being instantly restrained by the sentry, the unhappy man resumed his former attitude, whilst the wretch who had poured vitriol on his wounds went away uttering the unnatural laugh of a demon.

"She's a bad un," said the second mate, addressing the young man in the stern of the boat; and, then walking forward, he placed himself near an interesting and pretty girl, who could not have seen more than eighteen years. She had been child-maid in an eminent family, and had caused great jealousy on the part of her mistress, who suspected the existence of too great a familiarity between Susan and her master—how far there was any real grounds for this never appeared. The master quitted Ireland to attend to his parlia-

mentary duties, and was soon afterwards sent to a foreign court on a special embassy—the poor girl was apprehended for robbing her mistress ; a chain of evidence was produced on the trial confirming her guilt—some of the articles stolen, and valuable jewellery, were found in her possession—others were produced in court by those who swore they had received them from her—the jury returned a verdict of guilty, and the judge sentenced her to seven years' transportation.

Bitter had been the parting between her mother, a lone widow, and poor Susan—the girl, from the first moment, had protested her innocence, and asserted that it was a revengeful conspiracy of her mistress to destroy her ; but what availed the protestations of one against so many—the wretched girl was torn from the arms of her only parent, and now sick at heart, and earnestly praying for death to relieve her sufferings, she folded her arms upon her bosom, and stood the mute image of despair.

“ Susan, a lanna,” said the old woman who had taunted Shamus ; “ don't take on so—it 'ull be the making of you, jewel, and you the darlin o' the world that ye are—ounly the thrinkets not to the

fore, and you to be sent on a long voyage without 'em."

Susan turned an imploring look upon the wrinkled incorrigible, but her heart was too full for utterance; and it was at this moment the second mate stood by her side, and spoke to her in words of sympathy and kindness that came with a soothing influence to her heart—she felt that she was not wholly deserted, and tears relieved her from the oppressive weight which bowed her spirits down.

"I tould you so, Susan," muttered the old woman. "Sweet's your hand in a pitcher of honey, my darlin," and then attempting to sing, or rather scream—

"Lovers she'll have by the score,
And pitch 'em all to the divel,
Then she'll be sarching for more,
And bid 'em all to be civil."

"Never mind that old witch," said the young man, "she'll sing to another tune before the voyage is out, or I'm greatly mistaken."

"Ould witch, is it you mane," returned the hag, "and that's the differ atwixt glossy locks and grey hairs—the witch is by the side o' you, boy—and, mark me, afore this day three months an ye're a changed man."

“You have something ill-natured to say to everybody,” exclaimed one of the detachment of soldiers, sent on board as guards; “I wonder what they could transport such an amiable being for—some act of charity, I suppose.”

“Faith, an ye’ve just hit it,” retorted the other, “it was for being too charitable—I gave an ould miser a rope to hang himself.”

“Was that all?” said the guard, in a tone of banter, “I thought you had collected the cash for some asylum, and kept it with a ‘charity begins at home.’”

“Aisey—aisey, you sowl,” growled the old woman, “I never was a chate but onest, and then I gloried in it, though it cost me a six months’ lodging in Dublin univarsity.”

“Where, I take it, you have had many a six months,” said the man, “or else they have stolen your character. But what was it for?”

The old wretch primmed up her mouth, and, with a knowing look, answered, “Well, then, my darlin, it was for picklin sprats in my pocket, and selling ’em at the barracks for anchovies, shure,” and she walked off to vent her spite upon some one else.

“Hang the sputtering old fiend,” said the second

mate, "let us think no more of her. But, Susan, my dear girl, do not give way to sorrow—we are now upon the blue waters together, and months will pass away before we press the sod again. Now, Susan, you will have to make choice of a companion—for if you do not select a friend your life will be rendered miserable by continual persecution—the captain has already set his eyes upon you, and so has the doctor—you will, therefore, have no alternative but to share the favours of one of them, with other women in the ship, unless you will accept of me; and I pledge you my honour, by all that is dear and sacred under heaven, I will leave you to your own free-will—I swore to your mother, after you left her on the shore, to befriend you; and, by God's help, and your own consent, so I will—I have heard something of your story——"

"I am innocent—indeed I am," sobbed the poor girl; "oh! it is horrible to be punished thus for being innocent."

"Rather it would be worse for being guilty," returned the young man. "Whether innocent or not will avail you nothing; you are here a convict—I do not speak it reproachfully, Susan—for the sake of your mother I warn you," and his voice

became tremulous—"you will soon have to decide."

"Mr. Woolmer," shouted the captain, who had probably witnessed the manner in which his officer was employed, though ignorant of what was passing, "where is the second mate?"

"An its here he is, captain, dare," screamed the old woman; "faith, an he's taching the young cratur thing to say her prayers, may be—eh, Susan, darlin."

"Aye—aye, Sir," responded the second mate to his commander's hail; and, pushing aside the tormentor with, "out o' that, Mother D——ble," he sent the old girl sprawling on the deck.

From that hour Susan became the victim of persecution—the captain employed her about his cabin and endeavoured to force her to his wishes—the doctor treated her more condescendingly, but not with less persuasion; whilst the second mate kept aloof, and only gave her occasional glances, the meaning of which, however, she well understood—the chief mate was an elderly man, caring for nothing but the safety of the ship and a stiff glass of grog.

Delaney and the second mate had held frequent conversations together—and the very handsome ap-

pearance, as well as gentlemanly demeanour, of the convict, won upon the esteem of all. The women styled him "the priest," for whilst he was always ready to perform any manly act of kindness he never descended to familiarity, but kept every one at a respectful distance—even the old woman was awed before him. The seamen selected their ladies, and ultimately, Susan decided for the cabin of the second mate, to the great irritation of the captain, who muttered threats against the subordinate, for the preference which the girl had shown him.

Captain Benson was of an imperious disposition, though a very indolent man—he seldom deigned to hold conversation with any of his officers, and as the chief mate was extremely attentive to his duty, the commander seldom interfered. His cabin was like a seraglio, and the quarrels which arose served rather to amuse than to disturb him—he sat in judgment upon every case, and as his decisions were more the result of caprice or favour than the dictates of equity, he seldom gave satisfaction to any party, so that before long all despised because they feared him. The doctor loved quiet, and therefore contented himself with one—at least, one at the time ;

and, young and old, there were no less than one hundred and thirteen women on board.

It may very naturally be supposed that such a strange combination of characters as were here to be met with required rigid discipline to keep them in any thing like order, but, unfortunately, beyond classing them in messes of twelve each, with a superintendent, (called by the seamen "the white serjeant,") selected from amongst those who were most quietly disposed, over every mess, very little that could be styled regularity existed; and, perhaps, in no instance, either before or since, has a ship been sent out of the country with convicts under similar circumstances.

Benson was extremely strict in punishing, but his severity defeated his purpose, for the officers screened the bad conduct of the women through humanity, and, consequently, only those acts were punished which were forced upon his notice by the women themselves. There was considerable difficulty, too, as to the mode of punishment, for unless it was by stripes, or stopping the allowance of provisions, the unhappy creatures but too often set every one at defiance; and none was more hardened or determined than the old woman before-mentioned, who

was known, generally, by the name of Old Molly. Stripes she cared nothing for—if her allowance was stopped she mostly contrived to purloin from others so as to satisfy her wants—if they tied her wrists to the shrouds above her head she would stand and halloo and dance till every rag dropped from her back, and left her in a state of nudity—to gag her was a perilous attempt to whoever engaged in it, as she invariably left the marks of a good set of teeth in their flesh—the fir collar (a huge piece of wood, with a hole in it for the neck, that opened by means of slides, and then closed together so as to rest upon the culprit's shoulder) was abandoned, as she had contrived to perpetrate divers acts of mischief, by striking against others; and once even the captain himself received a severe contusion on the head by Old Molly running against him. There was only one coercive measure that she was afraid of, and that was called "*the casket*." An empty flour cask had one of its heads taken out and a circular hole cut in the centre of the other, sufficiently large to shove the skull of the offender through it. A hole was likewise made on two opposite sides for the arms to be extended, and of course the unfortunate who was thus confined could neither sit nor

lay down, and any violence of gesture or action placed them in jeopardy of a dislocated neck. This was Molly's terror, for she had actually been one whole night in it during a heavy fall of rain, and she never forgot the cascading she endured.

The soldiers (under a veteran lieutenant, who had seen sixty winters pass over his head,) employed to guard this *Hesperian fruit*, formed a detachment from one of the most sober, staid, and sedate of the Scotch regiments in the service; and much were they shocked at the depravity they were compelled to hear and to witness; but the frequency of the thing deadened the feeling of its immorality—the young men were the first to be lured into temptation, and though the seniors at first rebuked the juniors, yet as they found the inutility of endeavouring to stop them—like the drunken man who could not raise his friend out of the gutter, and therefore laid down by his side for companionship—so in the course of a short time the elders must “needs gang the same gait;” whilst to add to their unfortunate defalcation, they had more than one amongst them who could press the bag-pipes, till the chanters discoursed most eloquent music, and shut up as it were in close confinement with, comparatively

speaking, nothing but the women to occupy their attention, it is not to be wondered at that they fell. Dr. Watt says,

“Satan finds some mischief still,
For idle hands to do.”

And the soldiers were idlers in every sense of the term, whether used as the opposite to industry, or applied nautically; and they proved that the worthy divine was correct. Then there were reels and strathspeys of the devil's own invention—the Macpherson lilt, the highland fling,—till dancing became the order of the day or rather of the evening—the doctor insisted that it promoted health; and of course physical exercise saved his medicine chest. The captain was at first averse to it, but he gradually grew into the humour, and as by occasional deprivation he could frame a new punishment, so he yielded consent, and sometimes even condescended to join the convivial party.

Murtoch Delaney was never known to enter into the amusements of the rest—in fact, he was scarcely ever seen to smile; a deep and intense feeling seemed to absorb all his faculties, and he would sit for hours entirely alone, gazing at the horizon, or looking down into the clear blue sea—“pale melan-

choly marked him for her own." The surgeon had, on more than one occasion, shown him kindness and lent him books ; the mate had also been favourably inclined, but the captain appeared to take pleasure in insulting the misfortunes of this unhappy man, and therefore the mate cautiously abstained from any open manifestations of goodwill, though, when he could do it secretly, he was always ready to offer commiseration, and soothe his afflicted mind. Benson had in fact, solely because Delaney possessed the manners of a gentleman, ordered that he should perform many menial and degrading offices, asserting that it would be the means of bringing his hand into practice before he reached the colony ; and Murtoch obeyed without a murmur, though it excited indignation amongst his companions, that he should be compelled to submit to such degradation, whilst it produced a deeper feeling of respect for him, because the treatment was unmerited, and Old Molly's regard, if it could be so styled, bordered upon absolute reverence.

Time and the vessel both progressed, and they were approaching Cape de Verd Islands, when they experienced very severe weather, and were in peril

of being wrecked on the dangerous rocks, which have been fatal to many a brave craft ; but happily they got into Port Praya, where they recruited their stock and repaired damages.

After the lapse of three days, they again sailed, and without meeting with any material occurrence, they made Cape Frio, on the coast of Brazil ; and the next morning the *Juliana* carried the sea breeze into Rio Janeiro, and anchored abreast the city of San Sebastian, in one of the finest ports in the world. Here a fresh supply of water was obtained, and permission was granted for the women to land on the island of Cobras, to wash their clothes ; and here it was that, unrestrained by the watchful eye of the commander, or the discernment of the surgeon, many of the seamen, together with the second mate, had unimpeded intercourse with the convicts. It was a pleasant spot they had selected, and though a chain of centinels was posted to keep them within certain limits, yet there was ample space for their labour ; and whilst some were employed in the tents at the tubs, others busied themselves in spreading out to dry ; and those few who could afford to pay for exemption, exercised themselves on the shore or conversed with the people.

Amongst these latter Susan had been included through the intervention of Woolmer, (who had charge of the whole party,) and they stood together on a projecting part of the island, looking at the beautiful shore on the opposite side, which some years afterwards became the property of Sir Sidney Smith. The variegated foliage on the hills—the white buildings interspersed amongst the trees, and the numerous islets adjacent, looking like purple nautiluses, bathing themselves in the blue waters and redolent of sun light, showed like fairy land to the anxious gazers.

“I have kept my word with you, Susan,” said the second mate; “the promise I made your mother has been redeemed, and though Captain Benson claps the duty on me thick and dry, yet, dearest, I would bear ten times more for your sake, now that I so truly love you.”

“You believe me innocent, James, and indeed I am so,” returned the girl, “yet what should I now have been but for you? Yes, you have indeed been my friend: and oh! could I but once more be free, I would be your slave, or do any thing to testify my gratitude. But we must part, James—we must part, and then what will become of me?”

The young man looked upon her with a strong manifestation of tenderness, whilst it was evident a powerful struggle was shaking his mind. At length he uttered—"We will not part, Susan; I have debated the matter with myself, and what is country, and what is home to me, if you are not to share them? Had you been the guilty thing they would have made of you, still I would not leave you; but believing as I do, that you have been convicted and sentenced wrongfully—no Susan, no! we must live or die together!"

"You'll do it, then," said the old woman, who had hobbled up at the moment, and overheard the latter part of the exclamation; "faith an there's more lads than your ownself as has the same thoughts, my darlin, but how will ye get away?—there's the red coats around yez, and the blue wathers at yer feet; ye cannot swim to those free spots, purty as they look in the bright shine of the day. Purty? och hone! an what are they to the green hills and the shady valleys of the place we shall niver behold again? Yet betther follow Murtoch's advice, ye cannot escape alone:" and the old woman again returned to the tent.

"She is right, Susan, I feel that she is right in

what she says," urged Woolmer; "but could I see the faintest prospect of accomplishing your rescue without proceeding to extremities—if we could desert together? what then? we should be amongst strangers, of whose language we know nothing, and without money and without friends—pshaw! this is cowardly: I will risk all for your sake, Susan, for you are now the whole world to me."

"But is there not great danger in what Delaney proposes?" inquired Susan, as she looked anxiously in the face of her lover; "I mean danger to you, James."

"And are we not always in danger, love?" responded the second mate, as he smiled confidently upon his companion; "yes, there certainly is hazard, for the Scotchmen are determined fellows, and will not be seduced from what they conceive to be their duty. But Delaney has brought the women to his views; the seamen have become attached to their girls, and a woman's tongue, Susan, can do any thing with poor Jack, as it formerly did with Adam!"

"Be sarious, James, achree!" said the young female, as the tears stood gathering in her eyes,

“how do you think that I will suffer you to sacrifice kith and kin for me? become an outlawed man, and never see your counthry again? No, James, no!”

“This is downright perverseness, Susan,” returned Woolmer, somewhat pettishly, for he was offended at the decided tone she assumed: “just now, you were bemoaning your fate, under the prospect of being left destitute and alone at Botany Bay, and now I tell you there is every chance of obtaining your freedom, you meet my information with worse than cold indifference.”

“Oh! do not be angry or cross with me, James,” implored the weeping girl; “I have no friend left to me but you, and indeed, indeed, it will break my heart if you are offended and desert me.”

“I will *not* desert you, Susan,” returned the softened young man; “but you must at once make up your mind to be guided by my counsel. If my plans succeed, we may yet be superlatively happy together.”

She smiled through her tears, as the thoughts of freedom and comfort and happiness crossed her mind, but her brow grew heavier and darker as apprehensions of failure invaded the pleasant pros-

pect she had hastily formed. "And what if you should not succeed, James?" said she.

The young man looked upon her with calm firmness, as he answered, "It would be death, Susan—ay, death! But I will brave it all, dearest, for your sake, only bear in memory the peril, and let it nerve you to stronger determination."

"I *will* remember, James, and trust to you for guidance," exclaimed Susan; "oh! that my poor mother could hear thus far of my welfare—but see, James, there is a boat coming yonder, is it not one of the Juliana's?"

"It is," responded Woolmer; "away to the tent, Susan, and busy yourself amongst the women; Captain Benson is in the boat, he must not see us together on shore."

But he *had* seen them; for though they separated immediately, yet the quick eye of Benson detected who the parties were, and as soon as he landed he reproved his officer for what he alleged was a neglect of duty, idling his time with a favourite, instead of attending to the activity and promptitude of all. Woolmer bowed, but made no reply, and the captain walked up to the tent, muttering threats against the second mate.

The convicts had been classed, each twenty having a female placed over them as superintendent; and Benson, after addressing the superintendents, and urging them to greater expedition as the wind was fair, suddenly ordered Woolmer to return on board in the jolly-boat, and send her back again to the island.

Surprised, and rather suspicious, at this unnecessary command, yet the young man had no alternative but to obey. He gave Susan a look, full of meaning; and as he prepared to depart, the old woman, Molly, ran to him exclaiming, "Arrah, jewel dare, jist send me a bit o'soap in the boat to finish your shirts!" and then added, in a whisper, "rest aisey you sowl, faix an I'll take care as no harem comes to them as loves you."

More assured, Woolmer shoved off in the jolly-boat; and as soon as she had got alongside, Captain Benson called Susan to him away from the tent. The poor girl at first hesitated, but at length went. "I little thought, young woman," said Benson, rather sternly, "that you would have rejected my candid offers, and taken up with so inferior a personage in the ship, when its commander ten-

dered you his devoted regard. I have much in my power, Susan; my report, on our arrival at Port Jackson, will have great weight with the governor. What I *must* say of you remains at your own disposal. However, we cannot very well converse upon this subject here, will you go with me in my boat across to yon beautiful island, there we can talk more at our ease and fear no interruption."

"An wont you take me wid you, captain dare," said Old Molly, who had stole upon him unperceived: "gramachree an is it only the darlin o' the world here that you'd be putting your com-mether on, and her frind away?"

"Be off out o' that, you miserable old hag," exclaimed the captain angrily; "how dare you come prying and listening to my conversation?"

"Deed and deed then, captain dare, it was quite by accident and missellaneous that I comed nare you," said Old Molly, deprecatingly; "it was ounly to ax you to lend me the loan o' yer boat to go to the grand town for a taste o' whiskey, cushlamachree, but its the crame o' the world to an Irish tooth."

"Go to the tent and get on with your washing,"

said Benson, peremptorily ; “ if you are not very soon ready, you shall take your things on board half washed.”

“ Oh ! niver fear, captain darlin,” persisted the old woman, “ shure an its plenty o’ time you’ll give us, if you and Susan go over ayont to the beautiful bright shore with its green and gould.”

“ But I am not going, Molly,” uttered Susan, in a determined manner, and turning to walk away.

“ Avast, young woman,” vociferated Benson, his vexation stirring up his passion against his better and more prudent judgment ; “ avast, I say,” and he grasped her arm with violence ; “ you and your paramour think to outbrave me, but I insist on your accompanying me.”

“ An that’s a new way o’ making love,” said Old Molly, laughing ; “ shure an you must go, Susan, now he storms at yez ;” and she struck up a song—

“ Oh ! the captain is a gallant blade,
A gallant blade is he ;
No man like him could court a maid,
From Cork to Donaghadee.”

“ Captain Benson,” said Susan, firmly, and trying to disengage herself, “ neither your threats nor your promises of regard have any influence over

me. I am a poor unhappy convict it is true—may God befriend me; but you have no lawful right to exercise an unjust control over me—I will not go.”

“By Heaven, but you shall,” ejaculated Benson, dragging the terrified Susan by the arm towards the boat; “I will not be dared and taunted thus for nothing—you shall go, if it’s only to shew that I have the authority and power to compel you.”

“Och! and yer jist right, captain, a cushla,” said Old Molly, “faix an we’ll all go,” she shouted as loud as her shrill voice would permit; “arrah ye sowsls there in the canvas house, turn out—here’s the captain, long life to him, is going to trate us all with a ride and lashings o’whisky.”

In a few minutes the tent was empty; the women came running down towards the captain, who found himself under the necessity of relinquishing his prize, and in his rage he struck Old Molly a blow that felled her to the earth. “May your mother die childless, ye barbarian,” said the poor creature, as she raised her bleeding head from the ground; “an may she never know where to find the sod that covers her son,” added she; and again sang, though the tones were more like those of bewailing than merriment—

“ Oh ! the captain’s ship has left the land,
To sail across the wave ;
An his bones shall bleach on a furen strand,
An never have a grave.”

The clamour of the women at the unmanly attack they had witnessed, rose loud and high,—the sergeant of the guard came hastily to the spot with his men, but nothing could appease the anger of the enraged furies, who vociferated against the brutality of Benson. Had they been on board the case would have been different ; for several times during the voyage had corporal punishment been inflicted for misdemeanors, but the vengeance on Old Molly seemed to be so totally unprovoked, and with their feet on the firm ground, they almost fancied themselves free. The noise brought the Portuguese guard-boat, with about twenty men, whose gabbling rivalled that of the women ;—they wanted to land too, but this the Scotchmen were resolutely bent to prevent, and there was as pretty a piece of mischief brewing, as old Satan himself could wish for.

The Portuguese boat shoved close into the shore, and one of the men shouted out in an uncouth tongue, which produced an almost electric effect upon several of the women, who rushed down

to the water's edge, and precipitated themselves amongst the Portuguese, talking their wild Iris language, and hailing the crew as "counthrymen."

The guard boarded the boat to get back the women, but others pressed upon them in spite of the ugly knocks they received, and an indescribable scene of confusion ensued, rendering it utterly impossible for any one to hear or understand the orders that Benson and the sergeant were giving. The gallantry of the Portuguese led them to defend the *ladies*—the Highlanders very unceremoniously attacked both male and female: the *rencontre* brought other Portuguese boats to the scene of action; bayonets and knives were wielded in the affray, and Benson received a rather severe stab in the back, which was evidently meant for a death blow, but failed in its object by his suddenly changing his position.

Blood was profusely flowing—the women fought with desperate fury without caring as to which side they had for opponents, so that it was but a general row; and it was not till the first lieutenant of an English man-of-war brig then lying in the harbour, hastened with his armed boats to the island, that the tumult was quelled, and the convicts sent

without loss of time to the Juliana: there being, however, on mustering, no less than three of their number missing, supposed to have surmounted the rocky eminence that arose in the centre of the island, and then crossed over the narrow channel to the city, by the aid of canoes—at all events they were *non est inventus*.

There was no more washing done on shore; and a few days afterwards, notwithstanding the vigilance that was used, three of the men deserted, so that they were compelled to get three Portuguese to supply their places;—it was conjectured that they had followed the women; but though the captain of the man-of-war brig used every effort to discover them, they were too securely concealed to fear detection—a real British seaman was at that time worth his weight in gold.

The wound of Captain Benson, though not dangerous, was nevertheless extremely troublesome, and the doctor assured him, that unless he remained perfectly quiet he would not answer for the consequences; so that to the joy of the women he was closely confined to his cabin. The second mate had received a long and insulting lecture, and Benson was foolish enough to inform him, that if

the men had not run away so as to reduce the strength of the crew, it was his intention to have sent him on board the sloop of war; all this was endured with ill suppressed impatience, and treasured in memory.

At length the watering was completed, and the Juliana with her living freight of sin again stood out to sea. But who that saw those white sails glistening in the sun, and filled with the breath of heaven; who that beheld the handsome vessel with her colours flying as she passed the fort of Santa Cruz, would have deemed that she held so many aching hearts within.

Yet onward went the gallant bark; the Sugar-loaf was left astern, Morris's Islands were rounded, and away she danced over the blue waters, as if glad to be once more upon the wide ocean. But the captain's confinement relaxed the necessary restraints that discipline imposes; the chief mate was too quiet and easy to keep the men under a proper subjection, and though the soldiers were vigilant, yet intoxication and consequent disturbance became very prevalent. A great quantity of ardent spirits had been smuggled aboard — the aquadiente of Rio Janeiro, as pernicious and mad-

dening a liquor as ever destroyed human life, or debased human intellect. In the vice of excessive drinking, the Highlanders themselves were not backward, and it frequently happened that more than one or two were overcome by the deep potations they had swallowed of this liquid fire. As for Old Molly, she was seldom sober, though it could never be correctly ascertained from whence she got the stuff, and Shamus took "the laste taste in life, jist to keep breath in him."

Murtoch Delaney alone remained under perfect command of himself. "An why would you dthrink to your own desthruccion, Shamus," said he to his fellow-convict, as together they leaned over the bows, looking at the island of St. Catherine as it rose upon their sight; "when you quitted the owld roof tree, and bade farewell to the woman that is the mother of your childer, and to them same darlins which she brought forth to the world—the scalding dthrops fell like molten lead from your eyes, and when the beautiful blue land of Erin faded away, like a dthream of the night, the heart of you was ready to burst with 'och hone!—och hone! an ye are lost to me for iver.' But now there is a hope for you of escaping the horrible place of

earthly torment, and, if you're wise and honest, of again having the wife and childer round you. 'No,' says you, 'it was like killing the sowl of me to part, but though I have a chance to meet you all again, yet I'll murther both sowl and body with the bastely dthrink.'"

"Oh! then it's yourself, Murtoch, as has the way wid yer, any how," answered Shamus, "shure an the praste in his vestments couldn't howld a candle to you. Any one may see yer a born gentleman, and makes meself no better than a baste forenent you in regard o' the murthering cratur—bad luck to it."

"Blame yourself and not the liquor, Shamus," returned Murtoch, "it's well you know the liquor would not come to you if you did not go to that—you may as well blame Botany Bay for our being thransported."

"Still, Murtoch, it's all fair to curse the cause of your throuble; an shure the poteen has been the cause of throuble to me," responded the other.

"How aisily a man deludes himself as to causes," argued Murtoch, "we'd rather lay the fault upon any other thing than ourselves. Shamus, if you expect us to succeed in the affair we've talked of, you must keep sober; you must indeed."

“ Well, then, by the sowl o’ me, Murtoch, an’ I will, out and out after this blessed day,” asseverated his companion ; “ shure an I’d be a brute baste an I didn’t.”

“ But you make a reservation, my friend,” said Murtoch, “ you say *after this day*, so I fear you mean to indulge yourself in intoxication once more.”

“ No, by this and by that I don’t, ownly barring the dhrop that’s left in the bottle,” responded the other ; “ faix an there’s not a taste left more than ’ud wet the eye of a mole.”

Murtoch shook his head and smiled, “ I thought so,” said he ; “ well, off with you and swallow it at once. Remember the sacred promise you have made, and be ready ever after, for you don’t know when you may be called upon.”

“ By me conscience an I will,” asserted the man as he turned to depart, “ an bad luck to the dthrunk I’ll be again after this blessed day of all others,” he walked off, and winking his eye to himself muttered in an under tone, “ good cause why, faix an the bottle ’ull be empty.”

“ There goes a specimen of my poor countrymen all over,” thought Murtoch, as he gazed with a moistened eye after his companion in misfortune, “ no care, no discretion, beyond the existing mo-

ment; they have no future tenses in their moods, and become the prey of harpies who batten on their credulity. Oh, Ireland, Ireland! why do your hard-hearted rulers degrade your brave sons, and debase your lovely daughters? — Solely because whilst kept ignorant and besotted they more aisily enslave your minds, so as to govern you with a rod of iron. Oh, my counthry! my very heart bleeds for your wrongs, and the wrongs of your childther, dthriven to desperation in defence of their religion and their homes, and then torn by the cruel fangs of what is called the law, from all they love for ever.” —He paused, resumed his position, leaning over the bows, and pressing the palms of his hand upon his forehead, looked apparently on vacancy. But the chord had been touched that thrilled upon his soul, and its vibrations increased as the breath of memory swept over the harp of thought. “Oh, Ellen, Ellen!” he mentally ejaculated, “the love of liberty is strong within me—yes, of that liberty which my Maker gave, and my fellow-man has deprived me of! Oh it struggles in my breast—it nerves—it fills me out! Ellen, I must—I will be free for the sake of those destitute orphans you have left behind. Blessed spirit, thy consoling and

confirming influences are now stealing over my mind, like the sun-light on a hill that has been shaded by clouds:" he started from his position, raised his hands imploringly to Heaven, and then clenching them together audibly exclaimed, "*I must—I WILL be free!*"

"I think you are rather too free with your tongue already," said Woolmer, who stood before him, and spoke in an under-tone. "These bursts of passion, accompanied by such a wildness of look, will tend to excite suspicion, if they do not wholly betray you. Come, come, you must not indulge in them"

"It was perfectly involuntary on my part," said Delaney, called to a sense of his error; "I was unconscious that I spoke out; but there is an ever-stirring energy in my breast that will not slumber! and the nearer the time approaches—"

"Avast, avast!" urged the second mate, as he looked stealthily around him, "we are narrowly watched—Captain Benson has employed spies; henceforth we must scarcely know each other."

"There you will be wrong," remonstrated Murtoch, "for a change of conduct is more likely to excite suspicion. Caution is all that is requisite—but how long will it yet be?"

“ If the breeze holds, it will be only a few days at the most,” answered Woolmer, “ but Susan will inform you of every thing ; only tell me, are you still determined ?”

“ Ay, by Heaven, am I !” fervently ejaculated the other, his whole countenance lighted up by pleasure ; “ do you attend to your portion of our engagement, you shall find no flinching from me and those who share my confidence ; we are all prepared, and shall be ready at a moment’s warning.”

“ Very good,” returned Woolmer ; “ Susan is coming up ; she has something to communicate to you ; henceforward she must be the channel for future correspondence. Command your feelings better than you have done, and keep a bright look out to windard.”

The second mate walked away as the boatswain came up. “ A bright look out to windard, eh ?” said he, “ and where’s the use on it, with so many female women aboard. Let the weather be ever so fair, we’re sure to have a squall.”

“ An it’s a thousand pities ye ever had a mother,” responded Old Molly, as she approached towards him ; “ shure an it’s yourself as hates the women heartily.”

“ I don’t hate the women, owld Bellzebub,” exclaimed the boatswain, “ they are all very ship-shape and proper in their right places, Lord love ’em ! but a woman on salt water is like—”

“ A boasun in a parish church,” interrupted Woolmer, laughing, “ confoundedly puzzled to discover what service he’s on. Now, for my part, I’m pleased to see them—that’s the women, anywhere and every where.”

Susan made her appearance on the forecastle, and Murtoch, quitting the second mate, pointed out the pretty island as it seemed to lay slumbering on the bosom of the ocean. “ It is the land of promise, Susan,” said he, with strong feeling, “ the bright sunny spot that marshals us to liberty. Yes, Susan, I shall see my native land again, though there will be no smile to beam upon my return—no friendly hand stretched out to welcome me back—no voice of affection to breathe even my name !” He ceased for a moment and then continued, “ are the girls to be relied upon ? Will they act firmly, and for Peggy, will she not bethray us ?”

“ No, no, no, Misther Delaney,” answered Susan, “ they are as staunch as rocks, and long for the time to come ; especially those who are going for

life. Do not fear for them, they know their doom should the opportunity be lost, and if once free! though they may niver revisit their own home-shores, yet the world will be before them, to range as freely as the air."

"And the short terms, Susan," inquired Murtoch, "what of them, are they to be confided in? Will they not prefer servitude with the prospect of return at the expiration of the time?"

"There's not been many of them trusted," answered the young female, "not one more than was prudent. But balance present liberty again seven years' slavery yet to come, and you scarce need ask the question."

"My brave girl—may Heaven protect you, let you be where you will—and may your lover ever prove kind and faithful."

"He is to be my husband, Misther Delaney," uttered Susan, with evident gràtification, "he has promised, and I know—I am sure he will not deceive me; remember the word is"—

"FREEDOM!" whispered Delaney, "it is stamped on the inmost core of my heart, Susan," his look was bold and firm as she left him; "Ay, FREEDOM OR DEATH!"

CHAPTER X.

“ Oh, Heaven ! that one might read the book of fate,
And see the revolution of the times ; how chances mock,
And changes fill the cup of alteration
With divers liquors.”

HENRY IV.

THE third day after that on which the conversation, as recorded in the concluding part of last chapter, took place was Christmas-day ; and as the breeze was steady, the water smooth, and the evening beautifully fine, the pipers plied their chanterers, and the merry dance went on fore-and-aft the decks, as if there had been neither pain, nor grief, nor guilt, in the whole world, much less within the circumscribed limits of that lone atom that floated upon the waters.

The great cabin was deserted by its usual tenantry, and no one remained except Captain Benson, who was still confined, with the comfortable assurance of the surgeon that from the inflamed and festering nature of his wound, there was great danger of mortification, unless he preserved as perfect a tranquillity as possible ; in fact, he strongly sus-

pected that the weapon which had entered his body had been previously steeped in some deleterious liquid—at all events, he suffered at times the most excruciating pain, which was not allayed or diminished by the extreme nervous irritability of the man.

There he reclined upon his sofa, alone, and rendered more impatient at the restraint imposed upon him by hearing the sounds of merriment above his head; his *Dulcinea* had left him, to foot it away with his good-looking steward—the bell had been rung several times, but had been disregarded, and he laid, venting imprecations against the women, the Portuguese, the doctor, in fact every thing, and every body, but himself.

It was just as a sharp twinge from the lacerated part had produced a cry of impatience that Old Molly, apparently about three-parts intoxicated, intruded herself upon his unprotected presence. Where she had emerged from was rather a mystery, but as she was not heard to descend the ladder, there was reason to believe she had been visiting the berth-places of the soldiers, through a door of communication between the decks, that according to orders was never to be left unguarded; the idea struck Benson, that in the passing hilarity of the

moment discipline had become unnaturally relaxed, and that some mischief was in contemplation.

“What brought *you* here?” exclaimed he with vehemence, as the grinning old woman stood curt-seying with mock gravity.

“Oh then, captain dare,” answered she, “it’s meself as you sthruck down on the hard rock, bad luck to it, as is come to visit you in your throuble, achree!”

The exasperated captain, smarting with the pain caused by his own intemperate violence, uttered a full-mouthed oath, and then shouted, “Out of my sight, you drunken old hag—away with you, you filthy wretch, or by Heaven I’ll not only strike you down, but do for you altogether.”

“Arrah nabocklish, captain dare,” returned the crone; “by Heaven but you’ll do no such thing, me darlin. It’s jist a taste o’ rum you’ll be giving me,” and she walked to the side-board and grasped a decanter; “it ull be dthuc and dthurroc be tuneus.” She helped herself to a full glass and drank it off.

“Quit the cabin, you detestable devil, do,” roared the captain, tugging at the bell. “Holloa—where are you all? Steward, Mr. Brailup, doctor,” and he rose from the sofa, almost maddened with agony.

“ A pretty rookawn yere making, captain,” said Molly ; “ shure an they’re all too bissy wid their feet for any sound to get to their heads, barring its the pipes ; rest aisey then, alanna, and don’t fret your heart on my account.”

But Molly was mistaken, for both the chief mate and the steward made their appearance. The festivities were ordered to cease, and Old Molly to undergo the torture of the flour-cask. The music was stopped, the dancers—(and not a few of them were *reelers*)—openly muttered their dissatisfaction, but applied themselves more diligently to the aquadiente ; nor were the soldiers, though generally the most obedient men in the world, backward in expressing their discontent with the order, whilst they quaffed the maddening liquor to an unusual excess. Nor was there plenty of it wanting, as Woolmer readily supplied it, from what he called “ his own sea store.”

But the cessation of dancing was in a great measure atoned for by the amusement which Old Molly afforded, though it was not unmingled with indignant excitement, as she cut all manner of grotesque capers in her wooden chemise. This, however, did not continue long, for the poor unhappy creature fell, and was so severely injured, that her

hours seemed to be numbered ; and the chief mate having applied to the captain to release her, was positively refused, Benson declaring with many oaths, that “ she might die and be —— .”

The women had surrounded their companion, and endeavoured to offer those little kindnesses and attentions which are always grateful to the heart, for, notwithstanding the peculiarities of Old Molly, and her inveterate tongue, she was looked upon and patronised with something of the same feeling that people generally accord to the diverting tricks of a mischievous monkey ; and when they heard that she was not to be let out of the cask, clamour and threats ran to a great height. The wretched creature was bleeding and nearly insensible ; the doctor had swallowed too much wine, and had gone to his cot, from which he would not turn out, and it was evident that she could not long survive, under existing circumstances.

“ Does Captain Benson refuse to let the poor old woman at liberty, Mr. Brailup ?” said Murtoch, addressing the chief mate.

“ He does, my man,” returned the other quietly, “ and you know it would be sheer mutiny to disobey orders.”

“ Humanity—the commonest feeling of huma-

nity—would excuse you here, sir,” responded Delaney, “the poor old creature will perish, and however the matter may be hushed up in this world—the eye of God will witness it as a murder.”

“You are too forward and bold, Delaney,” said the chief mate; “but the sun is on the horizon—down with you all to your berths—sergeant, send the prisoners below.”

“Nay, then,” exclaimed Murtoch forcibly; “the sun shall not set upon so horrible a deed, and whatever may be the result, I will prevent it;” he whistled shrilly, and the summons was instantly responded to; “women,” he shouted, “go to the captain, and intercede for one of your own sex.”

At this moment Benson himself appeared upon the quarter deck with a pistol in each hand, and met the women, who were crowding aft; whilst Murtoch with a hammer drove off the hoops of the cask, and released Old Molly from her confinement. He then confided her to the care of Susan, and stood with folded arms, awaiting what would next occur.

“Call out the guard,” shouted the captain—“down with you—down to your berths every one, or I’ll send some of you to perdition. Mr. Brailup, Mr. Woolmer, come aft here, and stand by your

commander. Steward, call the officer of the guard. Turn out soldiers — there is mutiny amongst us.”

The chief mate took his station by the side of Benson, but no one else manifested a disposition to succour him. The soldiers, it is true, under their veteran lieutenant, drew up in line of battle abaft, but to the great surprise of the captain, without either musket or bayonet, whilst the ship’s company, almost to a man, stood forward on the fore-castle.

“What—what is all this?” enquired Benson, “where are your arms, Mr. Ferguson? Do you mock me?”

“Our arms are jist where nature placed them, upon our bodies, Captain Benson,” returned the lieutenant; “but as for the firelocks and bayonets, they have absconded from their places.”

Murtoch Delaney walked steadily, and with stateliness to the spot, where the commander was supporting his trembling frame. “Captain Benson,” said he proudly and firmly; “your control is at an end—the ship is now in my possession—your men have mutinied, and I am master here.”

“Villain!” wildly uttered the person addressed, “audacious, abandoned villain,” and raising one of

his pistols, he snapped the trigger—there was a mere flash in the pan, but no discharge.

Delaney stood unmoved, and a smile of contempt passed over his fine features. “Thry the other, captain,” said he, “you’ll find it go off just as well;” he gave another shrill whistle, and the whole of the mutineers came aft. “This man will not believe that his command has terminated,” observed he, addressing them—“cannot you convince him? but do it with respect.”

A loud cheer was the response, in which the women heartily joined, and Benson found himself wholly deserted, even by the females he had treated with kindness. They were also about to become clamorous, and more than two or three voices were raised in threats and imprecations, when a stern “Silence!” from Delaney quelled the tumult: “we have not all assembled,” continued the convict, and again he whistled, at the very moment that the soldiers, without any offensive weapons, rushed upon the seamen, and a battle-royal with fists ensued, in which the women bore a very prominent part.

Benson, agonized as he was, tried his other pistol, which was equally unfaithful; then grasp-

ing it by the muzzle, he plunged into the very thick of the *mêlée*, levelling all who opposed him. Nor was Murtoch idle, as he shouted "Freedom or death!" and snatching up a hatch-bar, dealt his blows with vigour on the soldiers. Again his shrill whistle sounded, as the seamen appeared to be somewhat worsted, and the men convicts came pouring up the fore-scuttle, every one armed with a musket and bayonet. Murtoch placed himself at their head, and both the seamen and the women sought for shelter in their rear.

"Mr. Ferguson!" shouted Delaney to the soldier-officer, "I call upon you and your brave fellows to surrender. You must perceive the utter inutility of resistance; nor will I answer for restraining my men, should you persist in a useless attack. Raise Captain Benson, some of you;" for he had fallen prostrate, face downwards, on the deck.

The lieutenant looked sullenly at the speaker, and then doggedly at his men, as he became convinced that their firelocks were in possession of the enemy, and they stood no chance of success in a renewed encounter. Still the spirit of the Highlander was aroused in him; he scorned to yield or withdraw his men, and was about again to com-

mand an advance, when the seamen, having collected whatever missiles they could lay their hands on, presented themselves on the quarter-deck, having got aft under cover of the booms and boats. At first, the lieutenant indulged a hope that the tars would close with the soldiers, and thus enable him to rush on the convicts, who would forbear firing lest they should injure their friends; but Woolmer, who headed the party, was too wary to commit himself, and after a second and third summons, the soldiers were ordered below, whilst their officer kept the deck, defying the rebels to their teeth.

But the point at which they aimed was fully gained; the ship was in possession of the convicts; and Murtoch, raising the still prostrate body of Captain Benson, found he was a corpse. At what period, or from what particular cause he had expired, was unknown, as, except his old wound, he had neither bruise nor scar; his lifeless form was conveyed to the cabin, and a few minutes afterwards was followed by that of poor Old Molly, who had probably yielded up her breath about the same moment of time.

Nothing could exceed the gratification of the women, as the prospect of freedom opened before

them, especially those to whom it came wholly unexpected. At first, however, stimulated by liquor, their actions were of a rather outrageous nature; and it was not till Murtoch assumed a supreme authority over the male convicts and Woolmer over the seamen, that any thing like order was restored. But the task was extremely difficult—both men and women had resigned themselves to lawless feelings; and now the mutineers had achieved success, they looked back, and found there was no possibility of receding; they looked forward, and saw that their future safety must principally depend upon themselves.

But it was with the women that Delaney succeeded best; he selected the most sober and best behaved amongst them, and earnestly endeavoured to impress upon their minds the danger which threatened the men to whom they had attached themselves if they persisted in the line of conduct they were pursuing. The safety of the ship—of every soul on board—depended upon their orderly behaviour and watchfulness; and even their liberty—that to which they looked forward with so much delight—rested on watchfulness and union amongst themselves; for the soldiers, though unarmed,

would act in concert, and would be prompt to take advantage of any and every opportunity afforded them to recover possession of the vessel, in which case, not only would their punishments be severe, but numbers must expect to end their lives upon the gibbet.

The remonstrance had a good effect ; the most depraved in existence—however they may personally despise and hate those who are superior to themselves in moral character—will, nevertheless, feel overawed by the influence they are enabled to diffuse ; and, in nine cases out of ten, will, perhaps reluctantly, yield to it. There is always an innate sense—a never-dying principle within—even amongst the most hardened—that assumes a power over the mind—the sovereignty of virtue over vice ; and in this instance, though the females were all tainted and degraded, yet there were distinctions—the result of conduct among them—that placed some infinitely higher in esteem than others ; and following Murtoch's advice, they obtained the mastery over those violent and distempered spirits which cared but little for future retribution or destruction, so that they might indulge in present intemperance.

By Woolmer's directions the course of the ship was changed more to starboard to make Cape Santa Maria, in order to run for the river Plate, and the breeze seemed to favour their intentions. It was about daybreak on the following morning, and Woolmer was walking the deck, when the surgeon made his appearance with "Good morrow, sir, the wind is freshening."

"It is," replied the second mate, somewhat austere, "and as she is travelling at least eight knots, I hope to be snugly at anchor this evening."

"At anchor!" exclaimed the astonished surgeon, "what do you mean by being at anchor?—are we making for any port, then?"

"We are running in for the river Plate," returned Woolmer, carelessly; "I expect to make the land every minute."

"I fear I was a little overtaken last night," remarked the surgeon. "However, Christmas-day comes but once a-year, and it's a sad heart that never rejoices. My head is sadly out of order, and I have laboured under some strange and bewildering dreams; in fact, I've got the horrors upon me, and must go into the cabin for a dose, to ensure a steady hand. Is the captain asleep?"

“ Yes,” answered Woolmer, solemnly, “ sound asleep—his bodily rest has never before been so quiet as it is now.”

“ I’m heartily glad of it,” said the surgeon, with evident satisfaction, “ that wound of his may give you a lift yet, before we get back again; I was afraid when I awoke that it might have been troublesome, and he had sent for me. Do you know whether this was the case?”

“ I think I can safely say that he has never sent for you,” returned the other. “ Poor Old Molly Malone required your help, and you refused to turn out.”

“ Does the captain know it?” inquired the surgeon, with some little alarm, for he was fully sensible of the condition in which he had retired to his cot.

“ Yes, I believe he was aware of it,” returned Woolmer; “ but you have nothing now to apprehend upon that score—it was through the captain’s obstinacy, and I may add unrelenting cruelty, that she sustained her injury.”

“ Mr. Woolmer—Mr. Woolmer,” remonstrated the surgeon, “ you should not speak so disrespectfully of your commander, especially in my presence,

knowing that it would be my duty to report it to him."

"You are perfectly at liberty to do so, sir," exclaimed the second mate, with a show of indifference and independence that surprised the professional man.

"No—no, Mr. Woolmer, I will not breed mischief in the ship," responded the doctor; "but you should be guarded in what you say. However, let it rest. Is Old Molly much hurt?"

"She was," answered Woolmer, "and that, too, very seriously. If you wish to see her, and are going down into the cabin, you will find her there alongside the skipper."

"Come, now! that's a good joke," said the surgeon; "almost as good as you're telling me that we are running for the Plate. Molly and Captain Benson alongside of each other; really you are a strange man, Mr. Woolmer—a very strange man!"

"You will find it true, nevertheless," urged the other; "there's no accounting for fancy, you know."

"Nonsense—nonsense, man," exclaimed the doctor, impatiently; "you mustn't think you can

make me believe such a thing. However, I must get a nip of the dog that bit me, and will just look at the captain; he may be awake, and prompt attention so early may erase remembrance of last night's indiscretion."

Quitting the second officer, the surgeon, with a light step, descended the companion-ladder, and noiselessly entered the cabin. The light of day was just breaking in at the windows, and caused a series of vacillating shadows, in the continued motion of the ship, so as to appear to the eye of the surgeon a sort of misty vapour in restless agitation. He listened for a moment, but all was perfectly tranquil; and a shudder crept over his frame at the death-like silence. He approached the sideboard and helped himself to a dram from the same decanter that had cost poor Old Molly her existence. He then advanced to the sofa, which was nightly converted into a bed-couch for the captain to sleep upon; he softly whispered, "Are you awake, Captain Benson?" but no answer was returned. He then observed that the sheet was drawn over the head so as to impede the breathing, and, as he gently removed it back, he became aware that there were indeed two persons

beneath the covering—side by side, and in the attitude of death. “Great God!” ejaculated he, “what is this?” He raised his voice—“Captain Benson—my dear friend—speak to me.” In the midst of his trepidation he loudly shouted, “Halloo! yo-hoy!” but there was no response; and, passing his hand over the face of each, he became satisfied that both had long since been dead.

A cold, sick shuddering crept over him; his faculties, for a moment, were paralyzed; he gazed intently on the bodies, without being able to move a limb, or to utter a word; and it was whilst labouring under the most disagreeable sensations that he felt a hand laid upon his shoulder, and heard a voice uttering, in sepulchral tones, “The debt of nature has been paid—the grave admits of no distinction.” He turned and beheld Delaney.

“What are you doing here, my man?” said the surgeon, hastily; “how is it that you are out of confinement? The death of Captain Benson must not relax the cords of discipline.”

“Nor shall it, sir, as far as I am concerned,” returned Delaney. “I believe every one is disposed to be obedient, and if not, there are ways and means of making them. You, perhaps, are not

aware, sir, that the Juliana has changed masters?"

"It follows as a natural consequence," said the doctor, "the captain being deceased, the command devolves upon the chief mate."

"Oh no, no," shouted the person alluded to, from his state-room; "the men have mutinied—the convicts have the upper-hand—the soldiers are all confined below, and"—

"We're running into the River Plate," exclaimed the surgeon, calling to mind what Woolmer had said; and, taking up the clue, "I see it all now. But, Delaney, I did not expect such conduct from you. What chance can you have for escape; and what will become of you, if taken?"

"I have considered everything, sir," returned Delaney, respectfully. "To you I am indebted for many acts of kindness; but I am an injured and an innocent man—the victim of a vindictive hate. I may lose my life, but there are living those who owe their existence to me, and who are entitled to large property. The risk I run I know to be great; but still there are the calls of duty as well as of freedom, and I obey their voice."

It was, however, with great difficulty, and only by acts of rigid severity, that the turbulent were kept under anything like restraint, and the men prevented from breaking open the liquor store; nor were the women backward in manifesting a determined spirit of resistance to all control. This feeling was greatly increased when, about noon, they made the land, and that evening anchored off the island of Maldonado—all order was set at defiance—intoxication ruled the ascendant, and the infuriated beings talked of murdering the soldiers.

As soon as darkness veiled the sky, Woolmer and Delaney, unperceived by any one, lowered the jolly-boat from the davits abaft; the steward was prepared with a plentiful supply of provisions, that were handed out of the stern windows—Susan, and another female, descended the same way—the three men followed, and left the devoted vessel to her fate. No other tidings were ever heard of her than the evidence of her wreck on English Bank, above Monte Video.

The tide was running up the river when the party already named drifted clear of the ship. For a long time, in the stillness of night, they could hear the maddened shouts of wild revelry, as the

desperate beings gave way to the indulgence of the worst of human passions; and at length, when the moon rose tranquilly upon the scene, scarcely a breath ruffled the surface of the waters. All was still, and calm, and passionless.

Woolmer and Delaney debated as to the best plan to be pursued, but they had come to no decision, when they discovered a large sloop at anchor right in their track. All three were well armed, and as there was every probability that, in so tranquil a night, no one would be upon the look-out, they determined to board her. Their conjectures were correct—they met with no opposition. A negro, who laid asleep abaft, looked up in amazement when they roused him; but he quietly laid himself down again when the steward, who could speak a little Spanish, told him that no harm was intended. The noise, however, brought the captain on deck, and with much difficulty they made him understand that they belonged to a ship then in the river, and wanted to get up to Buenos Ayres, or anywhere else that would ensure them safety.

The sloop was bound to Buenos Ayres, and the captain agreed to take them, on condition of re-

ceiving the boat as a recompense. At daylight the following morning they were under weigh, with a fair wind, and though at first they had to stem the ebb, yet, on the change of the tide, they made good progress, and on the following night were anchored abreast the town, about half a mile below the jetty.

During the passage Woolmer, by dint of unremitting earnestness in communication, succeeded in impressing the captain of the sloop with favourable sentiments towards them, and he promised to do all in his power to promote their interests; nor did he act unfaithfully. They landed, without molestation, all their money (and the steward had made free to collect everything, both cash and valuables, of Benson's that he could find), and whatever they had brought with them was untouched. They found shelter and protection with their new friend.

Delaney did not remain long in Buenos Ayres; he availed himself of the captain's offer to convey him to Monte Video, where he had a better chance of getting a ship for Europe. He bade farewell to his companions, and in less than a week was shipped in an English South-Seaman, bound on

the whale-fishery. But Murtoch did not calculate the length of time that this would occupy. Month after month rolled away, and the craft was not full when she was wrecked on a reef of rocks near a small uninhabited island, and every soul perished but Delaney and two others. Here they remained for upwards of a year and a half, having during that time collected a great quantity of seal skins, when a Manilla ship, for Lima, took them off, purchased their skins, and, being short-handed, was glad of their services to navigate the vessel.

From Lima, Delaney procured a passage round to Buenos Ayres, where he found Woolmer and Susan established in a large house for the entertainment and lodging of seamen; and the steward was doing extremely well as a dealer in hides and tallow. They gave him and his shipmates a most cordial welcome, and about two months afterwards they all three signed articles for a fine ship belonging to the United States, bound to New York, where, after a tedious voyage, they arrived in safety. Delaney's desire was to hasten back to Ireland, and prosecute his inquiries for his wife and children. For this purpose he embarked in a schooner for the West Indies; but here again his

evil genius prevailed, for the schooner was captured by a Spanish guarda-coast, under pretence that she was smuggling, and carried away to an obscure sea-port on the Spanish main, where the vessel underwent a mockery of legal process, was condemned and plundered, and the men and passengers immured in gaol. Here they remained, suffering dreadful privations and persecutions, for nearly three years, when, through the accidental arrival of a British ship of war, their imprisonment became known to its commander, who procured their release. And to such a dreadful state had they been reduced, that for nearly eighteen months they had scarcely a rag of clothing to cover their nakedness.

In the sloop-of-war they were treated with much kindness; and as Murtoch was considered a passenger of the schooner, he was classed with the American captain, whilst those who were subjects of Great Britain, were called upon to do duty, and subsequently they entered for the vessel. Murtoch now flattered himself that Fortune had ceased to persecute him, and there was a fair prospect of his returning home; but here again he was doomed to disappointment—the sloop fell into the hands of

the French fleet, and Murtoch was about twelve-months afterwards landed at Brest, a prisoner of war. Once more consigned to durance, his mind nearly gave way under the pressure of accumulated disasters that almost broke his heart.

Yet still the thoughts of his Ellen and her children, and the hope of meeting them again, buoyed him up from utter despair. He escaped from the fortress at Brest, and after encountering innumerable difficulties, he contrived, by passing himself off as a Spaniard (his confinement in a Spanish prison had made him familiar with the language), to reach a neutral port ; and in time, by means of a smuggling vessel, he effected a safe landing in England. Circumstances led him to London, where Lilyburn was then in high repute as a barrister ; for notwithstanding the eccentricity of the man, he neither wanted for penetration nor acuteness ; and as he was really indefatigable in whatever he undertook, he had gained several important causes. Desirous of obtaining legal advice, Murtoch had inquired for an able lawyer, and was recommended to the *ci-devant* captain of the Dolphin, who, on hearing his case, and being acquainted with the localities, determined personally

to investigate the whole affair ; correctly judging that if he succeeded he was a made man—if he did not succeed, he would be no worse off than he was before.

Together they travelled to Ireland, where Murtoch soon ascertained that Larry Laffan was yet in existence, and the interview between them was of that extravagant nature that suited poor Larry's character. This occurrence took place just at the time that Feaghan and Hamilton arrived for the purpose of collecting evidence to establish the identity of the youth ; and Murtoch and Lilyburn, ascertaining the place of rendezvous, though wholly unacquainted with the real cause for assembling, determined to join the party, and, when a fit opportunity offered, to declare themselves. This it was that caused the very unexpected meeting of father and son, which has already been described, and to which we must now necessarily return.

CHAPTER XI.

“ Such smiling rogues as these,
Like rats, oft bite the holy cords in twain,
Too entrinsicate t’ unloose.”

LEAR.

PROUD was Murtoch of his son, and though deeply grieved at the conviction that he should never again in this life behold the wife he had so ardently and fondly loved, yet the thoughts that his children were preserved to him, and both in such honourable stations, could not fail to soothe the keen distress which he would otherwise have experienced.

Oh ! it is a rich feeling of the human heart after years of storms and perils, with danger on the one hand, and affliction on the other—when almost wrecked and without a single hope to cling to ; oh ! it is a rich feeling to contemplate a haven of rest and peace, and Murtoch with his sanguine temperament enjoyed it to the full.

A summons from Feaghan, and they joined the party in the covered recess of the holy well. Two

dim lights stood upon the ancient altar, before which Bridget was kneeling, and a rough group in their cottamores and cloaks were gathered round. By the side of the altar stood Father O'Fogharty, who had also arrived, and at no great distance was his niece talking in whispers to the outlaw. Larry Laffan was in one corner, sometimes laughing and sometimes crying, whilst Lilyburn confined himself to no particular spot, but moved busily about, as if his presence had been required every where.

“ I am happy to inform you, Sir Terence,” said the bustling little counsellor ; “ very happy to inform you that we have everything in a fair train, and I make no doubt—for I am not often mistaken in such matters—I make no doubt that you will be restored to the family honours. The identity from the first moment of Bridget receiving you as an infant she had previously nursed at the hall—” Bridget groaned, “ You are about to do justice, my good woman, and therefore should be rejoiced instead of sorrowful—I was saying, Sir Terence, that your recognition is the most complete I ever heard ; the only difficulty is the little affair of the law, but that I think, by favour as well as legality, may be got over if it can be proved that your conviction was illegal. As for Mister

Cornelius, his ways, I fear, have been very *crooked*—

“Musha, then, it’s *all* crooked he is,” roared Larry.

“Peace, my friend—I meant no joke,” returned Lilyburn, seriously; “the subject of justice is of too solemn a nature to be trifled with.”

“As you shall amply find it,” exclaimed a voice from the entrance to the cavern; “surrender every soul of you in the king’s name.”

“Och, then, it’s sowld we are,” shouted Larry, as he sprang forward, flourishing his stick, but he was restrained by Feaghan.

“To whom, and for what are we to surrender?” inquired Lilyburn, proudly; “I am a free-born Englishman; moreover one of his majesty’s counsel. Produce your warrants”—

“Does one so learned in the law require to be told that warrants are not required in a proclaimed district,” said another voice, ironically—“you are here holding a secret meeting in defiance of the proclamation. There are amongst you”—

“Traitors and murderers!” shrieked a voice scarcely human, and the next instant the hunch-back Cornelius rushed forward in front. “Soldiers,

do your duty — make ready ! — present ! — ah ! what no arm move ? Major Williams, I command that summary vengeance is immediately executed.”

“ That may suit your views, but not mine, Sir Cornelius,” replied the officer ; “ rely upon it, my men will only obey my voice ; and, thank God, the period has not yet arrived, when a British officer is to turn executioner in cold blood.” He spoke to the group who were now assembled round the well, “ surrender yourselves peaceably, my good folks, and beyond the power of the laws, which you have broken, no other shall touch you.”

“ You must answer for this, Major Williams,” fiercely uttered the dwarf ; “ this place has already been a theatre of blood, through mistaken clemency.”

“ An its right ye are, *Misther* Cornalius,” exclaimed Bridget, placing herself in his front ; “ shure an I towld you so, long ago ; here it was,” and she threw her boney arm over the dwarf’s back — “ that Mike Hagan’s shtick struck yez down—that’s Sir Terence as is dead and gone—why ?—the curse o’ the misfortune fell upon the shouldthers of you, and made ye what ye are.”

“ Silence ! ye old hag,” exclaimed the dwarf, “ and how came you at liberty ?”

“ Not through the favour of Misther Cornalius O’Connor,” retorted Bridget scornfully.

“ And who are these accompanying you in your vile purposes ?” asked Cornelius, endeavouring, in the dimness of the light, to scan the countenances of the party.

In an instant, as if acted upon by one simultaneous impulse, Murtoch, Feaghan, and Hamilton, stood forward, “ I am your elder brother, Cornelius, and ye well know it.”

“ A returned convict and an impostor,” shouted the dwarf, as he writhed his long white fingers in his now grizzled hair ;—“ Major Williams, do you still refuse to do your duty ?”

“ I am here to support the civil power of the magistrate,” returned the officer proudly ; “ if he is what you state him to be, hand him over to the police.”

“ And who is this youth ?” inquired the mortified hunchback, “ here I suppose is some other trick—are you a brother too ?”

“ No, sir, my relationship is not quite so near,” returned Hamilton, bowing ; “ I can but claim

that of nephew to yourself, the persecutor of my father."

A laugh of derision was the response. "I knew it was imposition that was meant," said he, "my nephew! ha, ha! my nephew died, I saw him die—"

"Liar," uttered Feaghan, in a voice that thrilled with agony on the ears of Cornelius, for it was well remembered, "the child you murdered was not the one you coveted; there were two of them in the cutter, and it was not your nephew that you carried off to death."

"Major Williams! Major Williams!" exclaimed the now truly alarmed dwarf, "do you not recollect the fellow—is he living or dead—my head swims," and he thrust his hand into his bushy hair, and pressed it on his brow; "are you a man, a soldier, Major Williams?" continued he, "can you stand thus unmoved, when the rebel, the Smasher, who wounded you at the Devil's Cove—"

"Ha-a-a," returned the officer, drawing a convulsive respiration, and glancing keenly at the outlaw, "is that true? make ready—present—" the men thus far obeyed their commandant, and it is impossible to tell what the next order might have

been, had not Annie thrown herself between Feaghan and the soldiers.

“Howld!” she exclaimed, with devoted earnestness; “the bullet that pierces him, must first go through me.”

Major Williams could not witness such devotion unmoved, and he was not a little grateful that he had been saved from perpetrating a rash and indefensible act. “Recover arms,” said he, and the men as promptly obeyed the one order as the other.

“You have acted wisely, and perhaps generously,” said the venerable priest, coming forward to the relief of his niece; “an’ is it weak man in his passion that is to be entrusted with the instruments of death? Peace, Annie, jewel!” for the female was pleading for his forbearance; “you are a good and a brave girl, Annie, my blessing on your head.” He again turned to the officer, “It is said, ‘blessed are the merciful, for they shall find mercy,’ its the thruth you have heard this night.”

“I was perhaps too impatient, sir,” admitted the Major; “but you are not aware of the extent of the provocation. That outlawed man, sir, who I thought was in eternity—that man, sir—”

“Carries about him a royal safeguard, signed and sealed by the secretary of state,” uttered the priest, mildly; “this gentleman,” pointing to Lilyburn, “and myself, have seen it, and therefore we can vouch for the fact. And now, sir, I demand your safe escort before a real magistrate, where my deposition may be taken—that man is a murderer of the innocent.”

“It is a conspiracy, a vile conspiracy, Major Williams,” shrieked the dwarf, almost maddened at the sudden and unexpected revolution which affairs had taken. He had received information of the expected gathering at the holy well, but not the purport of the assembly, and when with the troops and police he repaired to the spot, it was under expectation of meeting with a band of rebels; but his quick penetration, influenced by a presentiment of evil to himself, led him to strange conjectures connected with his own peculiar welfare. “Major Williams,” he demanded, “will you see me thus insulted?”

“You have heard what has passed, Sir Cornelius,” returned the Major, coolly; and then turning to Feaghan, he said, “You will perhaps show me the protection the reverend gentleman has named?”

“To the honour of Major Williams I can have no objection to entrust it,” said Feaghan, producing the document; “and I too,” added he, somewhat proudly, “Smasher, the outlaw, must crave to be taken before a magistrate, where I may depose to which is the legal heir of the late Sir Terence O’Connor. You will see, sir, that his Majesty’s secretary of state has granted me permission to institute inquiry on behalf of this youth, who is under the patronage of the King. I did not know then that his father lived, and it was only on this spot, about an hour since, that the discovery was made. Here, Major, is the eldest born of Sir Terence O’Connor,” pointing to Murtoch, “and here are the evidences to prove the fact.”

“An’ its God’s thruth, Misther Cornalius,” uttered Bridget, “meself has warned you often and often that he would come to claim his own. The blessed Mary saw the deed when the child was stowle, and put the curse upon it; an’ where is yer own darleen, Misther Cornalius, the babe as was the delight of yer eyes, and the joy of yer heart that grats and grieves for the loss of her. Oh! the world is cowl’d and cheerless to them as has no helper, and ye harde what the praste said

jist now, 'blessed are the merciful, for they shall find mercy.'"

"This paper appears in every way correct," observed the officer, after he had carefully perused it by the light of a flambeaux held by one of the soldiers; "your request for safe convoy to the nearest magistrate shall be complied with; but first let me have the reverend father's word, that this meeting is not connected with any intended outrage or act of rebellion?"

"An' isn't my presence, Major Williams, guarantee sufficient?" asked the priest, with mildness; "shure an' its yerself, Major, as ought to know that."

"I stand rebuked, sir," said the officer, bowing with unfeigned respect; "the character you bear is bond enough to satisfy me: Father O'Fogharty is too well esteemed not to claim my reverential regard."

"What, then, am I to be betrayed, insulted, and degraded?" exclaimed the dwarf, thrusting his hand into his breast, and drawing forth a pistol, which he presented at Murtoch; "thus I redress my own wrongs." Young Hamilton saw the act, and springing forward caught the arm of his uncle

within his gripe: but the strength of the youth was far inferior to that of the dwarf, who fiercely hurled his nephew from him to a distance, and Murtoch would perhaps have fallen a sacrifice to the vindictive hate of his brother, but for the shelaleagh of Larry Laffan, that felled the deformed being to the earth.

“Major Williams,” said the priest, as he bent over the prostrate man; “would it not be better for us all to proceed to O’Connor Hall. Sir Terence here has the right to enter it, and as it is a family affair, may be it might be quietly arranged. The soldiers and the police might guard the place to prevent our running away, though its meself’s too old to run, and then the matter might be duly investigated.”

“Your proposal savours of good sense, sir,” returned the Major, “of course I am ignorant of the real state of the occurrences which have been spoken of; but if it is of a family nature, I can have no objection that it should be amicably arranged. We must, however, await the recovery of the magistrate, who certainly has brought the punishment upon himself.”

“Oh, Misther Cornalius, deare,” sobbed Bridget,

as she raised the head of the prostrate man, and rubbed his temples with her hard horny fingers ; “sure an you was a babe in the arms of me onest when I received yez from your dying mother, the blessed saint in glory. Its meself has nursed yez in yer helplessness—why? ye had no breast to cling to, no smile to welcome yours. Spake to me then, avourneen—is it dead ye are, an the cowl’d heart of me, still with the life in it? och hone, och hone, but he’ll never spake again. Shure an it was here,” she uttered with startling vehemence, “that the O’Connor, his father, fell before him—oh its the raal taste of the divel that separates hearts that love—an Dermot an Kathleen their sowls were knit together till the red gowld, my curse upon it, tore them asundther. Misther Cornalius, will you spake to me, jewel—will you spake?”

“Do not throuble his spirit, achree,” said the priest, “it is wavering about him, but will come back presently if you don’t dthrive it away: Bridget, let me see what I can do for him.”

Father O’Fogharty knelt down, and placed his hand upon the seat of life, which gave indications of returning animation, and shortly afterwards the wretched hunchback was enabled to be removed

between two of the policemen who supported him, and the whole body moved towards O'Connor Hall. Exalted were the feelings of Hamilton and his father as they entered the abode of their ancestors, and heard the benediction of the priest, as they passed over the threshold. Here, then, in the same spacious vestibule where Lilyburn and Feaghan had first met, and where Murtoch had been required by Cornelius to acknowledge himself an impostor, they were all assembled—beneath its roof that frowned with the same lofty grandeur, now as then stood the undoubted heir with his son ; and there, too, were the old opponents, as revenue captain and smuggler, acting in the joint capacity of friends to the injured and oppressed, whilst the groups of servants, peasantry, soldiers, and police, gave a wild character to the scene. Nor was the person of the aged Bridget the least prominent figure as she stooped between her wooden supports, and her eyes assumed an unnatural glare like the last flashes of an expiring lamp. There, too, was the venerable Father O'Fogharty commanding respect from all around him, not only as a minister of the Catholic church, but also in his own individual capacity as an honourable and upright member of

society ; and with his accustomed activity, moving from one to another with a word for all, was the portly, and, according to his own account, “ not easily to be deceived” Lilyburn.

But the persons who attracted the most attention were the renowned outlaw, Feaghan, scarcely less revered amongst the peasantry than the priest himself ; the convict, Murtoch, now the veritable Sir Terence O’Connor, and his son Hamilton, in the uniform of the royal navy, whilst Larry, with officious zeal, cowered round them with his stick as a sort of body-guard. Near them, still sustained by the two policemen, was the dwarf ; his latent energies, and all his aptitude for mischief reviving at finding himself once more beneath the roof he had called his own, and from which he apprehended there was a fearful prospect of being expelled.

It was at this moment the folding-doors were thrown open at the upper end of the vestibule, and upon the highest step appeared the still beautiful Beatrice, most splendidly attired. By her hand she led a youth, apparently about the age of Hamilton, whose handsome features showed a strong likeness to his mother. They were preceded by footmen in gorgeous liveries, carrying wax-lights,

that threw a strong effulgence on the white and crimson drapery of the lady's dress, and the spectacle was precisely of the nature best calculated to make an impression on the ignorant and lowly. She was descending the marble steps, when Major Williams advanced to meet her, and briefly explained the cause of the extraordinary scene that presented itself to her view, and exhorted her to retire. But the lady was nothing daunted; she boldly placed herself by the side of her deformed husband, and with her colour heightened by excitement, and her eyes flashing with vengeance, she commanded the place to be instantly cleared. But the voice that had heretofore only required utterance to be obeyed, for the first time failed in its effects. It is true, the immediate servants of the hall made a show of compliance, but the troops and the police had witnessed the gross conduct of the dwarf, and had heard the declaration of the priest, whom they all revered, and therefore they remained passive. At length her eyes fell upon Maurice Feaghan, who stood with Annie leaning on his arm, and her rage knew no bounds; she reviled him, as the author of all her misery, and cursed the "contemptible being, whom she was doomed to call husband."

“Mrs. O’Connor,” said Feaghan, as a spice of his former recklessness returned, “this is but a poor welcome to an old friend. You forget the pass in the mountains, madam,”—the priest deprecatingly held up his hand, and the outlaw bowed. “You are right, father,” continued he, “I have done them evil for their evil, and am silent.”

“This cannot be arranged to-night,” said the dwarf feebly, and in the softly harmonious voice he could at pleasure command. “Major Williams, to your care I commit the charge of those now present; I must retire to my room, entirely at your disposal; yet think not that I shrink from investigation or inquiry. As for those impostors,” his voice grew harsh, “they have my perfect, undisguised, unrelenting defiance. Here is the heir to my title and estates,” taking his own son by the hand, “my brother was stolen when an infant—so runs the tale—but I can produce proof that he was murdered in his childish helplessness—”

“Avast there, Mither Cornalius,” exclaimed Feaghan; “liars ought to have good memories, and you seem to forget you talked about a nephew, one whom you saw die—and you should have added, with a rope round his neck. Eh, was it not so?”

The deformed being trembled in every limb, his haughty bearing was gone, and fear was stamped upon every line of his countenance, whilst the beautiful being at his side scowled upon him with contempt.

“I am ill, Beatrice,” said he; “there is a raging fever in my heart.”

“And so there was a burning heat in the blood of a poisoned father,” sternly uttered Murtoch; “the wheel is rapidly revolving—the deed is coming home to you, Cornelius; and you too, proud beauty, whose thirst for title and supremacy urged the giving of the fatal draught.”

This was partly spoken at a venture, but it had a dreadful effect. The face of Mrs. O’Connor became convulsed; with her clenched hand she fiercely struck her husband, and then fell to the floor in a strong fit.

“Convey her to her room,” said the priest; “and Annie dear,” for the kind hearted woman had instantly tendered her ready aid, “you may accompany her, and give indulgence to the benevolence of your heart. Major, it is needless to delay the recognition—I here proclaim Sir Terence Hamilton O’Connor the rightful masther in this

place ; may the God of Providence grant him every blessing to enjoy it. Men—one and all, know Sir Terence here for the rightful baronet ; the proofs are too clear to be disputed.”

Alone, crouching in terror stood the youth whom the dwarf had addressed as his son, and Hamilton approached him with a voice of soothing kindness, but he shrunk away to the side of his terror-stricken parent, and then followed the servants, who were carrying off the inanimate body of his mother.

“ Cornelius darleen,” uttered Bridget imploringly, “ it is vain to sthrive again ’em—why ? he is your elder brother, born of the same parents as yerself, and there is no denying it. Och then, spake ’em smooth, avourneen ; it is mad she is—why ? the throuble is on ye both, and small blame to the lady for it ; bear up like a man, and the storm will blow over. Sir Terence will be your friend, and brother—”

“ Ten thousand curses on his head, and each the heaviest I could wish,” returned the inveterate hunchback. “ Get hence, vile hag ; never will I resign the title or estate ;” and springing forward, he rushed up the steps to his own apartment.

Servants are shrewd guessers into the affairs of

their employers, and as it was evident there was something wrong, without clearly ascertaining what it actually was, they prudently ranged themselves with the police: No one could blame them for this, and Major Williams, without taking part with any, made such disposition as would prevent any collision within, or any departure from the Hall. Feaghan and Hamilton, however, intreated permission to return to Castle Toole, to tranquillize the minds of the ladies, but the Major firmly declined granting the request, though he immediately despatched a messenger to render every information relative to what had taken place.

But few eyes were closed that night in the Hall, except those of the soldiers and the police off duty; and though Feaghan and Lilyburn jokingly reverted to the period when they last sat in the same room together, conversing upon the mosses in the mountains, yet it was the only exhibition of any thing like mirth that transpired during the long hours of darkness, and perhaps seldom has the smiling face of morn been more cheerfully welcomed.

The sun had not attained many degrees above the horizon, when the whole party, except Cornelius and his family, again met in the vestibule; and this

time there was a greater show of order, expresses having been despatched to no less than three magistrates, earnestly requesting their early attendance.

The requisition met with prompt compliance; the three gentlemen arrived, and shortly afterwards the carriage of the countess drove up, from which that lady herself, attended by two young females, alighted, and entered the Hall; one of the latter, Hamilton immediately recognized to be his sister, and taking his father's hand, he led him towards her. If the interview between the youth and his parent had been affecting, this was infinitely more so, when, in the features of Ellen he traced a striking resemblance to her almost idolized mother. But this outpouring of nature was not for every eye to gaze upon, and the countess, with her young attendants, withdrew into a parlour, whither they were followed by the father and the brother, and then unrepressed gratification had its full and free enjoyment.

The companion of Ellen was a lovely girl, apparently three or four years her junior, and Hamilton thought he had never seen any being more beautiful; but there was something in her countenance allied to uncertain recollections in his mind, that excited

painful emotions, though why, or wherefore, he could not tell. Whilst debating the question with himself, he drew towards her: but the fair girl did not wait for his advances, she held out her hand, whilst her face was crimsoned with blushes, and her head half averted, she uttered, "What, Hamilton, do you forget your fellow-traveller?"

A bewildering sensation clouded the faculties of the youth for a minute or two, from which he was relieved by the countess, who confirmed the words of the sweet girl, that she was indeed the individual, who, under disguise, with her face stained, had journeyed with him to Ireland; "and," added the lady, "there is yet a further surprise in store for you; in fact, you must love her, Hamilton; must be her friend, for she is your cousin, whom Feaghan, in a moment of revenge, abducted from her home, and has brought her up and educated her in England, as his own."

The unpleasant sensation which had coloured Hamilton's feelings was instantly explained; the fair girl's face was that of the mother's, though of course the features had not attained the maturity of the latter. Most cordially and kindly did the youth address the maiden, and strengthened her

with encouragement to meet her parents. Ellen, too, added her endeavours; and as soon as the general emotion had somewhat subsided, the party rejoined the others in the vestibule, where all was expectation for the appearance of Cornelius.

On the opening of the day, Major Williamshad sent to the apartments of the dwarf, to apprise him of the expected presence of the magistrates, as well as the necessity that existed for his taking his place amongst them during the investigation, as it was only in the capacity of a magistrate that he (the Major) recognized him, having nothing whatever to do with family matters. The reply was, that "he would appear at the proper time." But every thing was arranged, the other magistrates had taken their places on elevated seats, at the upper end of the hall, with a table before them, at which sat Lilyburn, the venerable priest, and the magistrates' clerks. An antique sofa was drawn forward for the accommodation of the ladies, and behind them were ranged the anxious but delighted Murtoch and his son, with Feaghan. On the opposite side, on a low stool, crouched Bridget, rocking herself to-and-fro, and occasionally crying "the doom is on him, och hone, och hone;" whilst

the rest of the persons taken at the holy well gathered near her. The space in front was occupied by the troops and police force, the servants and retainers.

“Major,” said the senior magistrate, “we are in readiness to commence inquiries, may we presume to request the favour of your sending for Sir Cornelius?”

The Major felt the awkwardness of his situation, for he had no authority to interfere with the dwarf; but nevertheless, as an act of courtesy, he directed one of the domestics to inform his master that the gentlemen were awaiting his presence. During the absence of the servant, the utmost silence prevailed—not a whisper broke the stillness; scarce a breathing was heard, and all eyes were directed towards the folding doors in expectation of the entrance of Cornelius. Several minutes elapsed, and amongst some of them suspense was rising to agony, when the footman hastily rushed into the hall, his face blanched, his limbs trembling, and with faltering accents he announced his master’s death.

“The doom is on him—the doom is on him, och hone,” vociferated Bridget, as she raised herself

erect, whilst symptoms of universal consternation spread over the whole company, which very soon changed into general confusion. Without waiting for directions, Feaghan and Father O'Fogharty hastened to the apartment of the dwarf, whom they found recovering from insensibility, but writhing with anguish—he had swallowed poison. “Send for him, where is he?” shrieked the deformed being, tortured both in body and in mind, “oh! let me see him once more.”

“It is his brother he wants,” exclaimed the priest; “let him be sent for.”

“No, no,” uttered the dwarf, “it is Feaghan—Maurice Feaghan and the boy; all of them—I must see them all;” and his face became contorted by convulsion.

“I am here, Mither Cornalius,” said Feaghan, approaching the bed, on which the dwarf laid partly covered over by the clothes, “rest easy, no one will injure you.”

“And Murtoch too, where is he?” demanded the writhing dwarf, as he thrust his hands amongst the bed-clothes, and glared wildly around.

At this moment Murtoch and Hamilton advanced, leading between them the beautiful girl

who had been announced as the stolen child of Beatrice. "Your brother is here, Cornelius," exclaimed Murtoch, "ready to extend forgiveness of the past, and to restore your long-lost daughter."

The wild shriek which the wretched being gave, thrilled with horror upon every heart, as he gazed upon the features of the maiden with a look fiercely unnatural.—"Come nigher, Murtoch—come nigher Feaghan, I am going—fast—away."

The persons addressed complied, both drew close to the dying man, who gave them a scowl of fearful meaning, and then suddenly collecting the last remnant of his strength, he drew his hands from beneath the coverlet, raised himself erect, and discharged a pistol at each of the persons he had so earnestly called to his side. Feaghan fell upon his face a corpse. Murtoch staggered backward severely wounded, and the dwarf, with one horrible yell of demoniacal delight, expired.

Awful was the scene in that room of death when the proud Beatrice became aware of the fate of her husband; but charity draws a veil over the spectacle. A coroner's inquest was promptly summoned, which led to a rigid investigation of the case, in which the claims of Murtoch were fully proved

—a free pardon for all past offences was granted by the king, and Sir Terence took possession of the abode of his ancestors as the lawful descendant of the O'Connors. But he was sinking fast — his feeble limbs would scarcely support his attenuated frame—the wound was destroying his existence.

Yet once more he stood in that hall, and now surrounded by his tenantry and friends. By his right hand he held his beautiful daughter, and in his left he presented his son, as delightedly he listened to the cheers of welcome which greeted him. The sounds were still echoing in his ears—the shouts of cordial congratulations were reverberating round the roof, when smiling in the fullness of triumphant feeling, he pressed his children to his heart, reclined backwards on a couch, uttered a fervent blessing on their heads, and, with the name of his wife upon his lips, his spirit passed away.

CONCLUSION.

YOUNG HAMILTON succeeded to the title and estates without opposition; he quitted the navy, and, by the aid of Lilyburn, devoted himself to better the condition of his countrymen. Mrs. O'Connor was permitted to keep possession of her husband's wealth on behalf of her son, and with him she retired to Italy; but refusing to recognize her newly-found daughter, the young lady was cherished as the friend and companion of Ellen. The countess lived many years to enjoy the society of her favourite, who became, not only from her history, but her beauty, the admired of the British court. Father O'Fogharty departed in a good old age; whilst his niece, who, from the decease of Feaghan, had assumed the widow's weeds, followed him in about a month. Bridget lingered but a short time in the vale of tears, and at her earnest request, she was buried near the tomb of Dermot Delaney. Larry Laffan was allowed to lead an

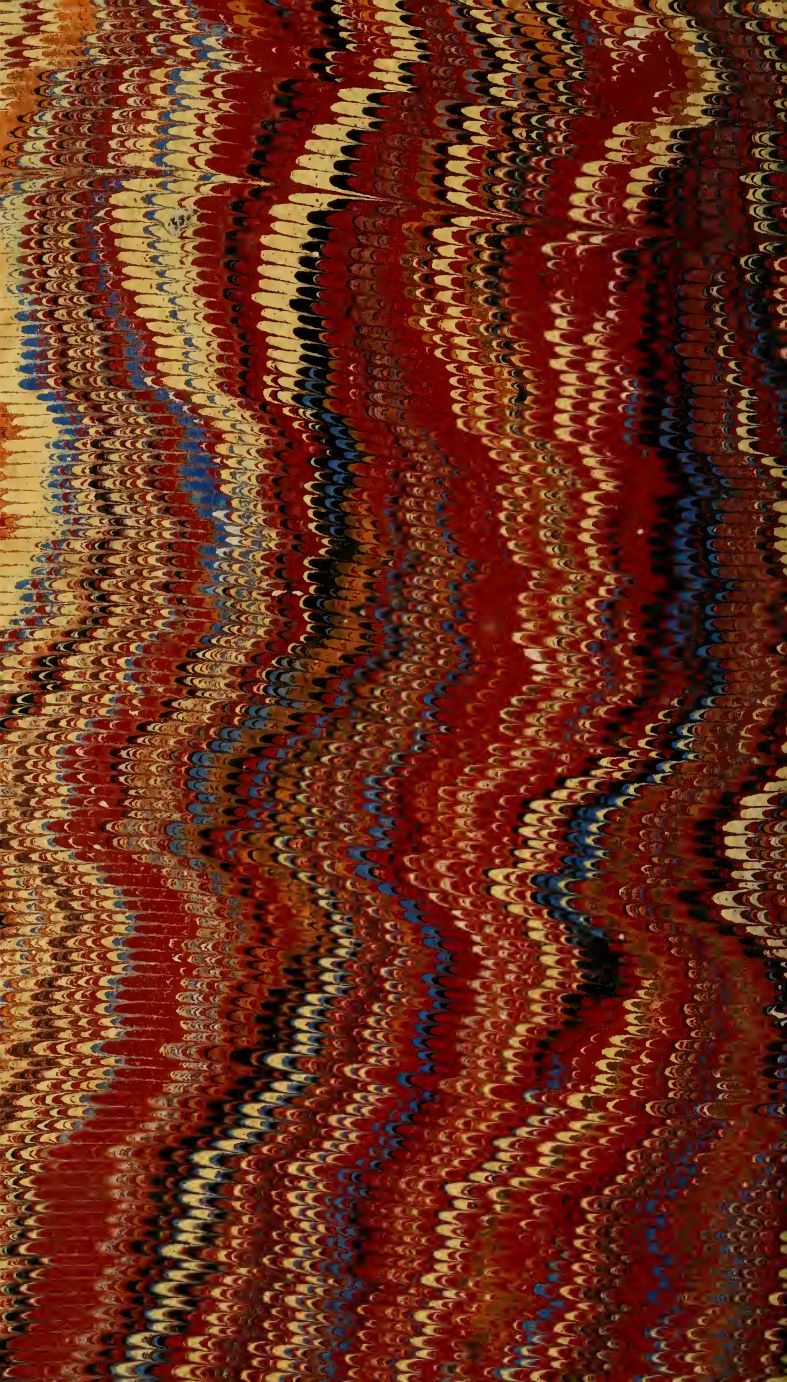
idle life for the remainder of his days, with plenty of whisky and “baccy.”

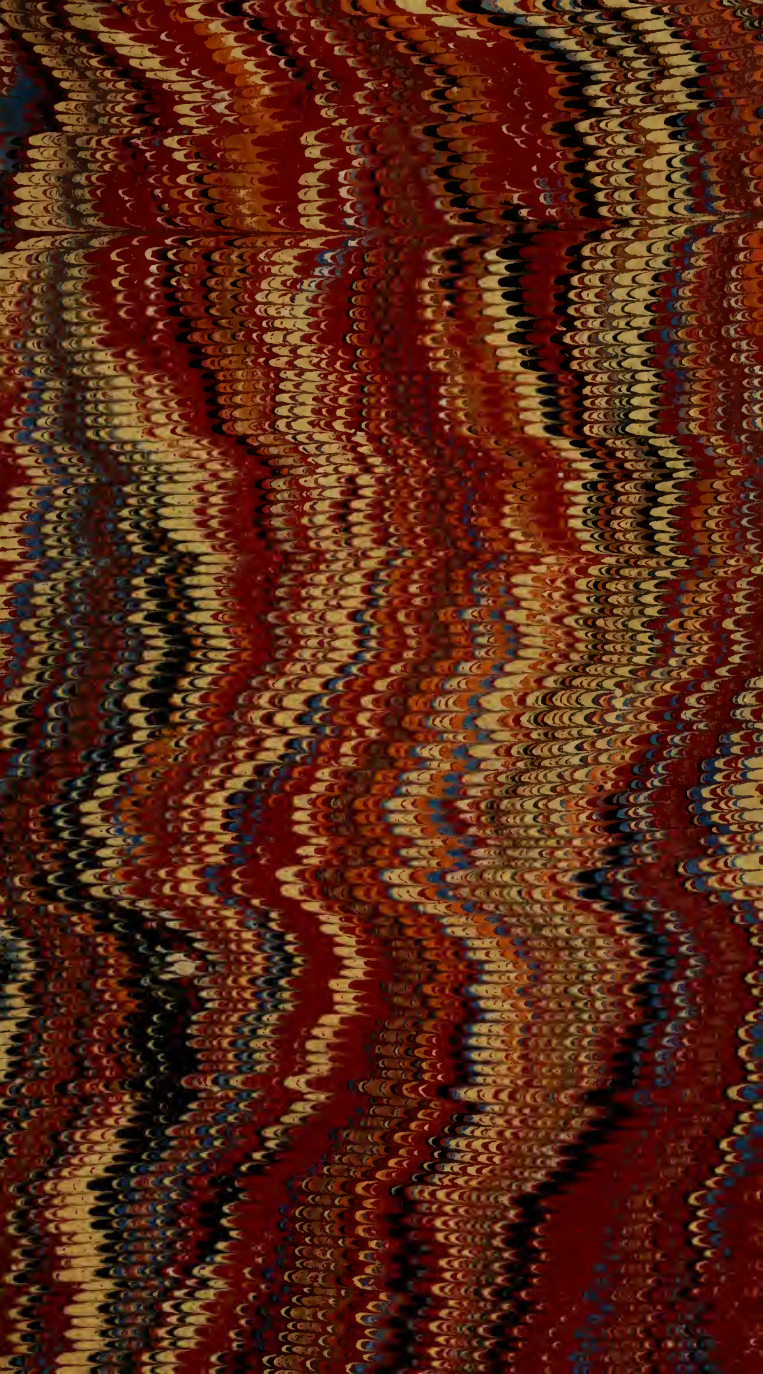
Madame Brienot, at the earnest solicitation of Hamilton and his sister, paid them a visit, bringing with her Quaco and old Tom Graves. Nothing could exceed the gratification of the worthy lady, who was ultimately prevailed upon to take up her residence with them—the black was installed house-steward, at first to the great annoyance of the Paddies, but as he did his duty by deputy, it all passed on pleasantly enough. Old Tom, having received ample evidences of Sir Hamilton’s generosity, returned to his family, and every succeeding year made him master of a handsome pension. As for Neptune, the poor fellow was amply taken care of, but he was found dead one morning upon the grave of his master.

THE END.

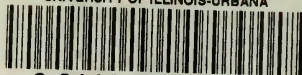








UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA



3 0112 040259720